University of Winchester

Egypt's Hidden Heritage: Cultural Heritage Management and the Archaeology of the Coptic Church

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This Thesis has been completed as a requirement for a postgraduate research degree of the University of Winchester

This study is respectfully dedicated to the memory of the late Pope Shenouda II, who took a great personal interest in my PhD project and supported it in every way

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Abstract:

The Christian cultural heritage of north Africa is ancient and rich, but at risk after recent political events. Many Christian minority communities living in Islamic environments feel at risk of persecution. This is a topical and timely PhD. The Christian, Coptic heritage of Egypt remains poorly studied from the perspective of heritage management and is also at risk from a number of factors. Using first-hand study and analysis based upon original fieldwork, the thesis offers a state of the art assessment to risks facing Coptic monuments in Egypt today. It does this by situating Egyptian heritage policy within the English framework, and it establishes theoretical approaches to value, significance, meaning, and interpretation in Egyptian heritage within a wider global framework. It is based on the analysis of three markedly different Egyptian Christian Coptic sites, each with their own unique management issues and it offers a series of solutions and ideas to preserve, manage and interpret this unique material culture and to emphasise community solutions as being the most viable and sustainable approaches, whilst taking into account the varied levels of significance of these monuments.

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Abstract

The Christian cultural heritage of north Africa is ancient and rich, but at risk after recent political events. Many Christian minority communities living in Islamic environments feel at risk of persecution. This is a topical and timely PhD. The Christian, Coptic heritage of Egypt remains poorly studied from the perspective of heritage management and is also at risk from a number of factors. Using first-hand study and analysis based upon original fieldwork, the thesis offers a state of the art assessment to risks facing Coptic monuments in Egypt today. It does this by situating Egyptian heritage policy within the English framework, and it establishes theoretical approaches to value, significance, meaning, and interpretation in Egyptian heritage within a wider global framework. It is based on the analysis of three markedly different Egyptian Christian Coptic sites, each with their own unique management issues and it offers a series of solutions and ideas to preserve, manage and interpret this unique material culture and to emphasise community solutions as being the most viable and sustainable approaches, whilst taking into account the varied levels of significance of these monuments.

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Chapter 1 – Introduction and literature review

1.1 The topical context of the present study

The threats facing the survival of cultural heritage in the near east and north Africa have recently been brought into sharp focus with the events surrounding the 'Arab Spring' and the subsequent violence that ensued in Egypt, Tunisia, Libya and Syria. In Egypt, the civil unrest began in January 2011 with anti-government supporters demonstrating against President Hosni Mubarak; buoyed and inspired by the successful uprising in nearby Tunisia, they forced the dissolution of parliament and military martial law was enacted upon the country (Balata 2011: 61), disrupting what some commentators have called the authoritarian status quo (Brynen, Moore, Salloukh and Zahar 2013:1). Since the events of 2011 there has been a break down in law and order with little police or army presence to protect not only the citizens of Egypt, but also the many historic buildings, monuments and archaeological sites across the country (Pers. Obs).

During the chaos that followed from the dissolution of Parliament, mass looting of sites and museums became commonplace, Sarah Parcak succinctly summed up the situation by stating that 'as stability decreased, looting apparently increased' (Parcak 2015: 196). One of the first heritage sites to be ransacked was the Egyptian Museum in central Cairo. Eighteen items were stolen and over 70 other objects were knocked over and destroyed (BBC 2011). The ransacking was not limited to the capital with other museums being looted; Mallawi's (Minya Governate) museum, situated 190 miles (305 km) south of Cairo, was ransacked by thieves in a more organised manner than that of the Egyptian museum, with 1041 objects stolen and 48 others destroyed (National Geographic 2013)[1]. UNESCO reported that 589 objects have been recovered, but many more are still missing and are likely to never be recovered (UNESCO 2013a). Finally, and most recently, the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo was damaged by a bomb blast in January 2014 (BBC 2014). Many of the objects inside were destroyed and the building

[1] Many of the events in this section discussing the Egyptian uprising and subsequent looting are too recent for academics to have critically assessed the damage and consequences; therefore, many of the sources are derived from popular media and personal observations made during visits to Egypt.

was severely damaged. The lack of finesse and brute force of the looting at these museums indicates crimes of opportunity, but also a distinct lack of respect for cultural heritage, be it Islamic, Coptic or Pharaonic.

Although the museums of Egypt have borne some of the loss to Egyptian cultural heritage as a whole, many other archaeological sites across Egypt have been vandalised and pillaged by illicit excavation. Al-Hammam, a Graeco-Roman site in the Delta region, has been stormed by looters twice since the civil upheaval. In January 2014, armed gunmen attacked the site with the intention of stealing rare antiquities to sell on the black market (Al-Ahram 2014a). Other archaeological sites have been damaged via encroachment by local villagers; at Dashour, local villagers started to build a cemetery and bury their dead on an archaeological site, while at Matariya and Fustat, Cairo, residents started to use the sites as waste dumps and build structures upon them (Cairo Observer 2014). This general background of social unrest threatening the heritage of Egypt has sadly more specific ramifications for religious heritage.

Fig 1.1: Aftermath of the looting at the Egyptian Museum in Mallawi (National Geographic 2013).

During this period, the Christian (Coptic) minority community that lives in Egypt saw an increase in both violence and damage to their churches and monasteries. Many Coptic Christians have experienced extreme violence from Islamic militants throughout

their long history, but most recently the attacks and damage to their properties has intensified. In January 2011, a bomb was exploded outside the al-Qidiseen church in Alexandria killing 24 Copts (Guardian Online 2011a); in May of that year, a protest became deadly when the Army opened fire and killed Christians who were protesting the demolition of one of their churches. This action became known as the Maspiro massacre. The loss of life has been great in the post-revolution era but this period has seen many churches and monasteries attacked, burnt and demolished. Perhaps the most significant attack to Christian buildings was in August 2013 when 42 churches in Minya, Asyut, Sohag and North Sinai were attacked and damaged, some seriously. It was reported by the organisation Human Rights Watch that this was in retaliation for Christians supporting the ousting of the Muslim Brotherhood from political power (Human Rights Watch 2013). Among the churches damaged was the historic church of the Blessed Virgin in Delga, Minya which was burnt down a month later in September 2013.

It is clear that the protection of Egyptian antiquities in revolutionary times is a sadly topical subject; the precarious political situation has left many archaeological sites and historic monuments at risk, Christian, Islamic and Pharaonic. This thesis aims to examine a single segment of this heritage: The Coptic Christian heritage, the legacy of an increasingly persecuted minority and one of great antiquity, diversity and meaning. This is an understudied and poorly known heritage, the material culture of an ancient Christian community which once was a dominant force in Egypt, and now faces existential threats. In this thesis, a broad spectrum of Christian parochial and monastic sites across Egypt will be assessed; their current condition and management strategies critically appraised. These historic buildings are under great threat from damage by a cross section of society, whether they be Islamic militants (who wish revenge upon the Christian minority for perceived historic wrong doings) or organised gangs of looters who may wish to steal ancient treasures or local inhabitants who do not realise (or care) they are damaging historic monuments. Whether the motivation is financial or ideological, this is a serious threat to an important and understudied heritage.

Fig 1.2: Looting Pits at El Hibeh (Redmount 2013: 41).

Sadly, the destruction of Christian heritage (monuments, churches, burial places, monasteries, visual culture, etc) is a common theme in the middle east in recent times. This is particularly the case in Syria and Iraq, where recent political events have usurped the previous status quo (where Muslims and Christians were able to live in relative harmony). Into this power vacuum have stepped any number of Islamic fundamentalist groups such as Islamic State who have begun to eradicate any religious system that is not Islamic; part of this doctrine is the destruction of other religious heritage, whether it is Roman or Christian (Parcak 2015; Harmansah 2015; Casana 2015). In forcing Christians from their homes, or engaging in genocide, they seek to eradicate some of the world's oldest Christian groups. Destruction of this Christian heritage is a sad by-product of the events of the 21st-century in the near east. The Coptic Christian community of Egypt is in the words of Niall Finneran (2002: 62), one of these 'great survivors'. In order to understand something of its antiquity and cultural diversity, some brief historical context needs to be provided.

1.2 The Copts of Egypt: a brief historical context

The Coptic Church has a rich history dating back to the first centuries AD, and this history has been a battle for survival, at first within the period of Diocletian-era

persecution and widespread martyrdom, through Greek Orthodox/Byzantine domination and then under successive Islamic regimes. The term Copt is derived from the world 'Aegyptos' (Du Bourguet 1971: 9) and originally the term referred to Orthodox Christians, but after the Muslim conquest it was applied to all Christians within Egypt; the term 'Coptic' is therefore an ethnic label (Finneran 2009: 7). It is estimated that there are currently 15 million Coptic Christians living in Egypt (Binns 2002: 172), this is roughly between 10-15% of the population.[2] This is arguably the largest Christian minority of an Arab state. This thesis will argue that it is an untapped resource into a field often overlooked by scholars of history and archaeology, who, after the more prestigious sites and artefacts of the well known Pharaonic and Muslim periods have ignored a very relevant piece of Egypt's history.

Fig 1.3: Mosaic in St Mark's Church in Venice of St Mark passing the Pharos (lighthouse) at Alexandria (Tour Egypt ND).

[2] It must be made clear that the Coptic Orthodox Church is an anti or non-Chalcedonian church. The Council of Chalcedon in 451AD resulted in a permanent schism between the eastern and western churches. The Coptic Church along with the Eritrean, Armenian, Ethiopian and Syrian churches believed in monophysitism, or the one nature of Christ; this was against the ruling of the Council of Chalcedon which dictated that there were two natures of Christ (diophysite); the Roman Catholic Church and Byzantine rite churches in particular follows the ruling. This thesis is not a study in theology and so this is the limit as to how far the debate on the schism will go. For further reading see Millar 2008. For the sake of brevity, it is important to note that these Oriental Orthodox Churches, found in north-eastern Africa, the middle east and in southern India have traditionally been seen as apart from mainstream Christian communities

Christianity in Egypt is reported to have been introduced by St Mark in circa 30AD (Kamil 1987: 33) and is still widely practised today; the Coptic Pope still sits as the head of the See of St Mark (Capuani 2002: 45). Christianity had spread from Jerusalem into the neighbouring provinces of the Roman Empire, but Christians living between the 1st and 3rd-centuries in Egypt did not fare well. Persecutions were often and sustained; they lasted between months and sometimes years at a time and many thousands died for their beliefs before Constantine's edict of toleration in 313AD. Some of the first persecutions were enacted under the reign of Septimus Severus (193-211AD); the Islamic Chronicler Al Maqrizi (admittedly writing much later in 1364-1442AD), reports that Severus destroyed churches and killed hundreds (1873: 34). Widespread persecutions did not occur until the Emperor Decius' reign (249-251AD) and continued under the rule of Valerian (253-260AD) (Watterson 1988: 24). It was Valerian's son Gallenius (260-268AD) who revoked the edict of persecution and gave back the churches which were seized (Haas 1983).

Yet this was not to be the worst of the persecutions; this was to be during the reign of Diocletian in 303AD. Particularly savage, they have now come to be known by the Coptic Christians as 'The era of martyrs' (Capuani 2002: 9). There are debates between scholars of this period who argue over the voracity of the persecutions. The Egyptian Coptologist Gawdat Gabra offers a conservative estimate at between 2500 and 3000 deaths (Gabra 2007: 15) while Montague Fowler takes a more face-value approach and estimates the death rate at 14,400 Christians (1901: 19). Other scholars (eg, Davies; 1952: 13) play down the persecutions as a whole and say that it was a very small part of the first three centuries. It is certain that persecution was a part of daily life for Christians and it was this background of sporadic, but intense oppression from which the Coptic Church was born. Indeed, Diocletian's oppression was so bloody the Coptic calendar begins with the year Diocletian came to power; it is known as the Year of the Martyrs (284 AD) (Papaconstantinou 2006: 65).

It is not unsurprising that after Emperor Constantine's edict of toleration in 312AD,[3] the church began to flourish under the new patriarchs; their new found

[3] The Edict of Milan was a treaty forged in 313AD by the Western Emperor Constantine I and the ruler of the East, Licinius. They agreed to allow the veneration of any deity whoever it may be, and for all churches and lands previously confiscated by the Empire to be given back to the Christians. We know of the edict owing to a surviving rescript preserved by the Christian author Lactantius in Latin and a Greek translation by Eusebius in his book

freedom allowed them to debate openly about their faith; this can be seen within not only the writings of the ancient fathers but also in the art and architecture of the early period. Alexandria in this age was the centre of theological learning and debate, with the Catchetical school (a school of theologians and priests), opening in c. 180AD (Walters 1974: 4). To begin with, it consisted of predominantly wealthy Greeks (Du Bourguet 1977: 22) and included in its members the 'father of theology' Origen (Meinardus 1992: 34), who wrote *De Principiis* and a number of other non-surviving theological works. These early fathers paved the way for the Coptic church to grow and become more involved in future theological debates on the nature of Christ, seen as the Councils of Nicea (325AD), Ephesus (431AD) and Chalcedon (451AD).

The goals of these councils were to discuss various doctrines on the nature of Christ; often ideas were put forward and challenged, and a number of heresies and divisions between the bishops became apparent. The Council of Nicea in 325AD was the first time all the bishops had gathered to talk through the differences they believed were inherent in Christianity, this included schisms owing to Arianism (the belief that Jesus was not God, but mortal), the first of many heresies. We learn from Al Maqrizi that during the time of Timotheus (454AD) many churches were built and turned away from Arianism, confirming that it was a large problem for the early Egyptian church (Al Maqrizi 1873: 52). Arius was subsequentally banished by Emperor Theodosius (Cannuyer 2001: 31) at the council of Nicea for his beliefs. The main focus of the Council of Ephesus 431AD was the Nestorian heresy; Nestorius, Patriarch of Constantinople believed that Jesus and God were two separate entities and refused to call Mary '*Theotokos*', meaning Mother of God (Cannuyer 2001: 42-3). It ended with Patriarch of Alexandria, Cyril excommunicating him and banishing him to near Antioch (Fowler 1901: 36). He was banished for 55 years according to Al Maqrizi and died in 450AD (Maqrizi 1873: 56). It has been suggested that after the Council of Nicea, the patriarch of Alexandria believed the Christians of the world sympathised with their beliefs and valued their knowledge and genius (Tagher 1998: 2).

It was at the council of Chalcedon, however, that caused the schism from which the Coptic Church would never rejoin the Byzantine church, the Melkites (Byzantine-rite Christians) in Egypt, however, still accepted Byzantine authority (Meinardus 1992: 6). Emperors Zeno (425-491AD) and Heraclius (610-641AD) both

Ecclesiastical History. For a broader analysis on the Edict see Carotenuto 2002.

sought to reunite the divided Christian kingdom via their policies of *Henotikon* and *Ectheos* respectively (Tagher 1998: 2). These both failed to reunite the warring bishops of Christianity and led to the Coptic Iconoclasts to break away from the Byzantine church and its doctrines. This division is still seen in Egypt with Melkite, Eastern Orthodox, Catholic (Uniate; see below) and Coptic churches and monasteries acting independent from one another; for example, the Monastery of St Catherine in Sinai is an autonomous Eastern Orthodox monastery (Kamil 1991: 1) completely separate from the Copts. In addition, there are the Coptic Uniates; these are a small number of Copts (circa 4000) who are in communion with Rome, but retain the Coptic liturgies (Armanios 2011: 120). So, the history of the Coptic Church is seen very much as being written, from an 'Orthodox' viewpoint, in terms of being 'heretical'. This theological narrative has very much set up the study of the Coptic Church, and in particular, its material culture, as being a study of the exotic, the foreign, almost the 'outsider'. It has existed on the margins of European Christendom, and this liminal position has framed the study of its rich material culture and heritage.

A large proportion of this material culture, focuses not upon the theological nature of Christ, but rather the evidence left behind by early monks who formed early monastic communities. Archaeological evidence suggests that early monasteries in the Scetis (Wadi Natrun) were semi anchoritic, with monks living together in bands of up to 40 (Gabra 2002; 26-7). The churches at Kellia in the Wadi Natrun are some of the earliest recorded; Kellia is a large hermitage site 17km west of Nitria (Watterson 1988; 72) and it is thought to have been created by monks wanting a more ascetic life than offered by the quickly growing hermitage site in the Scetis (Kamil 1987: 126 and Watterson 1988: 72). Kellia was first excavated by Archaeologist Antoine Guillaumont in 1964 and then a larger joint Franco-Swiss excavation in 1965 under the direction of Rudolph Kasser (Meinardus 1999; 154). These excavations revealed 1600 hermitages and a number of smaller churches; most importantly they offered a glimpse into the evolution of the small one roomed churches into modest sized two aisled basilicas. The evolution of monasticism from ascetic (solitary) to Pachomian and Antonian can be traced in the archaeology at Kellia and Nitria, but also at the Red Seas Monasteries. St Pachome (292-346AD) is often credited as the first person to create community based worship (Walters 1974; 3), his first community was set up at Tabennisi, Upper Egypt. The *Rule of St Pachomius* was translated by St Jerome in the early 5th-century, which meant that he gained, what James Goehring notes as pre-eminence (Goehring 1999:

26), with many monks flocking to his newly founded monasteries. These were settlements where groups of monks lived and worshipped together rather than living a solitary life in a cave. It would make sense that as ascetic hermits turned to Pachomian lifestyles they would build structures to suit their group needs such as a refectory and a mill. We shall now turn to a brief consideration of the scholarly study of the material remains of these sites.

The Muslim conquest of Egypt in 641 wrestled control away from the Christian Byzantine Empire and placed the Coptic population under subjugation, yet, it would be unfair to paint the initial Muslim conquerors as completely intolerant of the Copts. As Pierre Du Bourguet states, there was a 'relatively favourable atmosphere' (1971: 161) between the two peoples in these early centuries until the rule of the Fatimid Dynasty (969-1171). During this period, and indeed throughout the subsequent centuries of Islamic rule, the Copts retained positions of administration previously held during Byzantine rule, in what today would be considered the civil service. Jacques Tagher believes that the Muslims knew very little about the act of governance in these early years (1998: 36), and retaining the Byzantine structure of administration that was tended to by the incumbent Copts (who understood how to govern Egypt) (Du Bourguet 1971: 28) was a practical move. The Copts, although treated generally with respect, still faced caveats to the Muslim tolerance. For instance, in the 8th-century they were forced to wear distinctive coloured clothes (Du Bourguet 1971: 29), and they were taxed *Jizya*, a yearly tax upon *dhimmis* (non-Muslim subjects). By c. 750, the *Jizya* poll tax had caused a mass conversion to Islam (Mikhail 2012: 111); this obviously had a massive impact upon the Coptic Church's coffers and its ability to sustain the upkeep of churches and monasteries.

This minimalist approach by the early Muslim conquerors, as it has been termed (Mikhail 2012: 110), allowed the Copts to rebuild their churches and consolidate their patrimony. It was during this period that some of the earliest surviving medieval churches were constructed. Recent archaeological excavations within the Roman fortress of Babylon have concluded that the initial foundations of Abu Sarga and Sitt Barbara date to the late 7th to the early 8th-century, shortly after the Arab conquest. This certainly indicates that the Copts could continue practicing their faith during this period and relations were semi-congruent for this to occur. This toleration did not last and throughout the Fatimid period of Egypt persecution, murder

and destruction of churches and monasteries was common. The Islamic Chronicler al Maqrizi recorded that the Fatimid Caliph al Hakim razed a large amount of churches (Maqrizi 1813: 89), with Otto Meinardius placing the amount of churches destroyed around 3000 between 1000-1017AD (Meinardius 1992: 8). A general decline in the amount of clergy within Egypt occurred in this period, with a tax of one Dinar upon each monk levied since 705 (Gabra 2002: 2; Du Bourguet 1971: 29), causing a dearth of monks within the desert monasteries in the Wadi Natrun and near to the Red Sea by the 12th-century. A period of revival occurred in the 13th-century, with the advent of the Abuyyid Dynasty (1171-1250), who were much more tolerant of the Copts than the Fatimid dynasty. Some authors when discussing this era have described it as particularly vibrant (Sheehan 2010: 105) and this can certainly be observed in the sheer amount of restoration and rebuilding of religious buildings during this era. For example, the monasteries of al Baramus and St Macarius in the Wadi Natrun were heavily reconstructed in this century. Further examples are apparent in the churches within the fortress of Babylon in Cairo such as Sitt Barbara, which evidences a rebuilt nave and aisles from this period, whilst Haret Zuwaila contains 13th-century restorations and wooden carved doors. The 13th-century also saw the wall paintings of St Antony and Paul being created; this really was a period of rejuvenation for the church. This period of reinvigoration was complemented by the writings of Islamic Chroniclers such as al Maqrizi, Abu Salih the Armenian and El Bekri; these accounts have survived to this day and have been used by previous historians and archaeologists as primary sources to provide a window into Coptic history.

Unfortunately, this reinvigoration of the Copts gave way to a second period of decline during the Mamluk (1250-1517) and Ottoman (1517-1805) control of Egypt which saw many of the monasteries become abandoned and subsequently fell into disrepair. By 1512, the monastery of St Antony had been inhabited wholly by Syrian Monks, who had replaced the Coptic monks who were previously slaughtered. An indication of how grave the situation was for the church in this period was that there were not enough Coptic monks within Egypt to repopulate these now empty monasteries (Meinardius 1992: 13). This period was particularly grave for the Copts with the Ottoman rulers removing the Copts from their previously held positions in office (Makari 2007: 48); indeed, their greatest achievement has been described as purely surviving through the 14th-century (Mikhail 2014: 50).

It was not until the late 18th-century that prominent Coptic businessmen and officials began to fund restorations and improvements at monasteries and churches; perhaps the most prominent was Ibrahim al-Jawhari, one of the most important Coptic political figures of the 18th-century. He built a chapel at Haret Zuwaila (Gabra 2014: 33) and funded the construction of the mill, and refectory at St Paul's Monastery amongst other restorations. The rule of Muhammed Ali in 1805-1848 changed the fortunes once again for the Copts, his focus of nationalism and toleration allowed the Copts to reconsolidate their powerbase, with his son Ali Pasha, once again allowing members of the Coptic community to take jobs in the civil service. This toleration of Copts continued throughout the 18th and into the 19th-century under the Ali dynasty and their nationalistic revival.

In 1855 the *Jizya* poll tax levied upon non-Muslims was abolished (Sedra 1999: 223), and this improved toleration led to a significant reversal in fortunes for many Copts and a substantial increase in wealth. A great deal of Copts had become land owning 'elites' through Muhammed Ali's nationalistic revival (Sedra 1999: 223). Indeed, after 1882 and the occupation by Britain, some authors have suggested this was a 'golden age' for the Copts, where they held 25% of the country's wealth and held 45% of the jobs within the public service industry (Zeidan 1999: 56). This increase in wealth and social standing in Egypt led to another resurgence in Coptic identity. Leading into the early 20th-century a move towards 'Coptism' became apparent, this was a movement propelled by young, educated, professional activists who wished to re-evaluate the identity of the Copts and to study the tenets of the 'old' church (Sedra 1999: 225). Within these young activists was a young Nazir Gayyid, the future Pope Shenouda III. Many of the Copts during this period supported and were involved with the *Wafd*, a secular nationalistic political party (Zeidan 1999: 56), indicating young Copts were highly politically motivated in this period.

The second half of the 20th-century saw a decline in Coptic rights, and a move away from participation in public life. The 1952 revolution and particularly the rule of Gamal Abdel Nasser in 1956 oversaw a restructuring of land ownership and a re-appropriation of wealth. The Land Reform Programme took power away from the upper classes who were predominantly Copts (Zeidan 1999: 57) and the Coptic supported *Wafd* party was dissolved. It was during this period that Pope Shenouda III developed a co-operative relationship with President Nasser to try and maintain the

rights and freedoms of the Copts (Haddad and Donovan 2013: 216). Anwar Sadat's rule (1970-1981) was more right-wing than Nasser's, who was supported and by more militant Islamic groups (including the Muslim Brotherhood). This led to Sadat openly accusing the Copts of supporting a conspiracy against the state (Zeidan 1999: 54) and the exile of Pope Shenouda III (Haddad and Donovan 2013: 217). The Copts under the Hosni Mubarak era of rule have fared slightly better but there have still been issues with violence against Copts as discussed earlier in the chapter. Pope Shenouda developed a good relationship with Mubarak and it is reported that behind the scenes he worked tirelessly for Coptic rights (Haddad and Donovan 2013: 217).

The 21st-century has seen an incredibly tumultuous beginning with the 'Arab Spring' forcing President Mubarak from office, the ascent of the Muslim Brotherhood and their downfall and replacement by General Abdel el-Sisi, but crucially there is still an issue with violence against Copts. Current data suggests that Copts in the 21st-century largely populate Cairo and Upper Egypt, with 60% of all Copts living in Sohag, Assyyut and Menya (Zeidan 1999: 54; Mohamoud, Cuadros and Abu -Raddad 2013: 5). It is important to note that the issues of Coptic identity that were vibrantly and openly discussed by young educated professionals in the early 20th-century have re-surfaced recently. While publications in the 19th-century ignored Coptic heritage and identity (Van Doorn-Harder 2010: 479), the 20th-century did see a great deal of publications focus upon these issues, but in the past twenty years, towards the end of the 20th-century there has been the production of more multidisciplinary studies, ones which focus upon not just the Christian era of Coptic studies but the post medieval and early modern era (Van Doorn-Harder 2010: 479). Nelly Van Doorn-Harder suggests that this can be directly mapped on the increase on Coptic migration to Australia, the US and UK and has led to new questions being presented related to identity and the roles of youths and children (Van Doorn-Harder 2010: 479). Clearly the issue of Coptic identity is resurfacing and is now being challenged and discussed in a much more open forum.

Governate in Egypt	Amount of Copts living in Governate (Circa)
Cairo	609,000
Sohag	600,000
Assyut	590,000
Menya	500,000
Alexandria	140,000
Aswan	80,000
Red Sea	40,000

Table 1.1. Table showing population of Copts living in each governate (Mohamoud, Cuadros, and Abu-Raddad 2013: 5)

1.3 The Copts in western scholarly literature

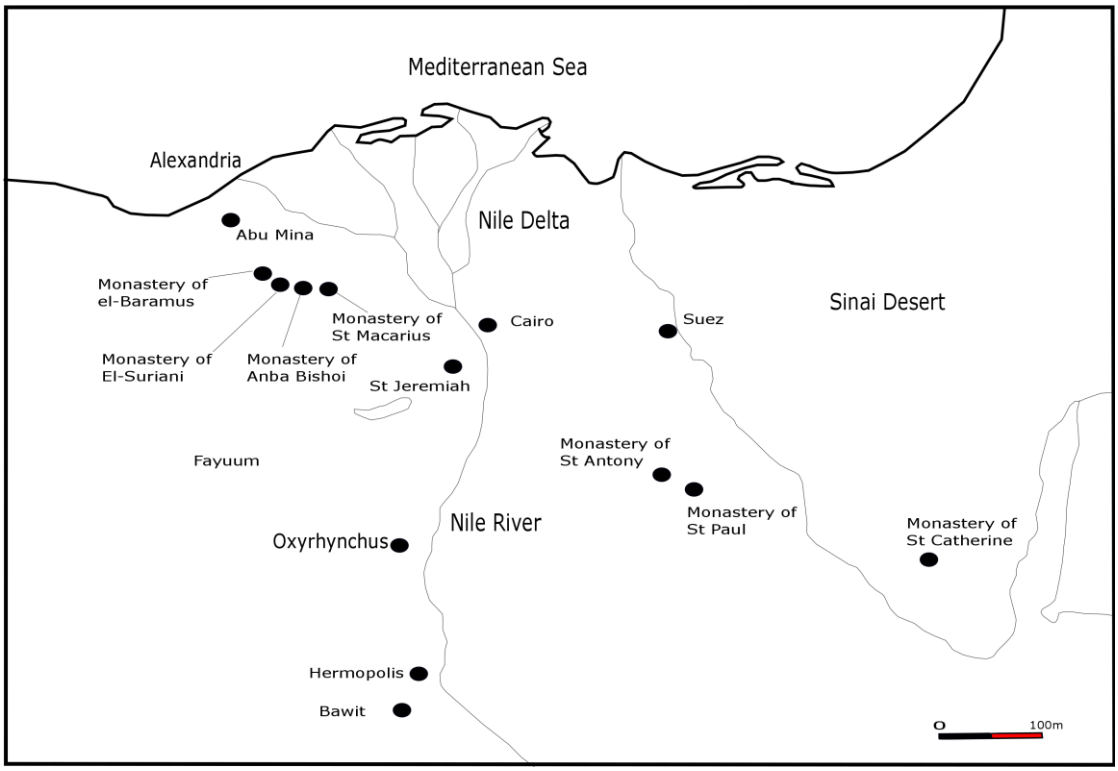

Fig 1.4: Map of Coptic sites in Lower Egypt (Finneran 2010: 3).

Interest in Egyptian Coptic Christianity reached its zenith in the late 19th and early 20th-centuries. It was a period when many European archaeologists were mapping, recording and excavating the standing buildings and archaeological remains of the

Coptic Church (as well as Egyptian antiquities as a whole)[4]. Perhaps the most prolific archaeologist in this period was the Italian archaeologist Ugo Monneret de Villard (1881-1954), who excavated a number of monasteries in Aswan (southern Egypt), including the large monastery dedicated to St Simeon (which is more correctly known as the Monastery of the Virgin, Dayr Anba Hatre); his findings were published in his site report *Il Monastero di S. Simeone presso Aswân* in 1927 (Monneret de Villard 1927).

Some of the most important architectural finds were discovered during this period; excavations at the monastic site of Abulla/Apollo (Bawit) in 1902 by the French archaeologist Jean Clédat uncovered numerous architectural features such as basket capitals, wooden sculptures and a number of inscriptions which are used today by architectural scholars as a baseline for dating other Coptic sculptures of the period. Much of this material showed clear affinities with Mediterranean classical forms, as well as blending in a distinctive localised artistic style. This is the motif of Coptic studies, the idea of synergy, or hybridisation, a meeting of the classical and pharaonic worlds. His findings were published in *Recherches sur le kôm de Baouît and Nouvelles recherches á Baouît* (Clédat 1902 and 1904). During the same decade (1906-1910), the English archaeologist James Quibell excavated the extensive monastery of St Jeremiah (Apa Jeremias) at Saqqara; this too, like Bawit, produced some of the finest examples of Coptic architecture (Quibell 1908). This decade also saw the great basilica at Abu Mina, one of the most important and monumental Coptic churches, first excavated by Karl-Maria Kauffmann, a German archaeologist from 1905-1907. This could be said to be ‘a golden age’ of Coptic archaeology and discovery. To some extent this interest had been piqued by the revival of an Orientalist historical movement in nineteenth century Europe, when western travellers and writers focused upon the perceive ‘exoticism’ of

[4] Interest in Coptic history and archaeology reflects a much wider taste in the study of in the 'exotic' or 'Oriental' in the 19th century; the interest was increased by the diaries of 'adventures' across perceived exotic locales such as Egypt, Algeria, and Nepal. These travels were documented by Gustave Flaubert in his diaries during his travels in 1849 throughout Egypt. This cultural trend was critiqued by Edward Said in his book Orientalism (1978), he formed the view that westerners viewed eastern cultures as exotic, but also sets themselves up as 'better' than other cultures. Orientalism continues into the 20th century and interest in the Copts comes from S.H Leeder's Sons of the Pharaohs (1918); he was clearly influenced by the works of Flaubert and concludes that the Copts are the descendent from the original Egyptians. Abba Seraphim's study of the Western episcopal succession of the Syrian Orthodox Church in the 19th-century provides some much needed context of this era (Seraphim 2006). Orientalism is still prevalent among works of fiction in the 20th century, James Hilton's novel Lost Horizon (1933) and films such as Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom (1984) are notable examples. It is important therefore to contextualise the study of Coptic material culture against this wider backdrop.

the mysterious east.

Fig 1.5: Ruins of Bawit, Monastery of St Apollo (Capuani 2002: 192).

Fig 1.6: Ruins of the 6th Century Monastery of St Jeremiah, Saqqara (Capuani 2002: 121).

It was in 1908 during this 'golden age' that the Coptic Museum was built, becoming a state museum in 1931 (Basta 1991: 607). The museum houses and promotes important Coptic antiquities, initially consisting of items from Coptic homes,

churches and monasteries, it received marble columns, elaborately carved woodwork and archaeological objects of distinction from the Egyptian Museum (Basta 1991: 607). It is perhaps its collection of Coptic manuscripts which is its greatest achievement, preserving thousands of ancient manuscrips including the famous Nag Hammadi manuscripts (Basta 1991: 608).

The first western historian[5] to actually record the standing churches and monasteries in Egypt was Alfred Butler (1850-1936) who published *The Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt* in 1884. This gave an excellent narrative description of the churches of Egypt and described their individual layout, its icons, and any historical facts that he could glean from the historic fabric. It is noteworthy in that it is only one of a few books which recorded the ancient churches of Cairo in any great depth. Shortly after Butler's study of churches, architect George Somers-Clarke wrote a study of the standing church ruins in Upper Egypt with his monograph *Christian Antiquities in the Nile Valley* (1912). He noted that there were three distinct types of church floor plan- basilica with nave aisles and galleries, a modified basilica church to support a dome and a post conquest flat wooden roofed basilica church (1912: 31). After Butler and Somers-Clarke recorded churches and their history, Hugh Evelyn-White visited some of the same churches Alfred Butler had documented thirty years previously in the Nitria and Scetis region, his book *The Histories of the Monasteries of Nitria and of the Scetis* was published in 1926 and was a re-evaluation of Butler's work[5].

[5] Although Alfred Butler is what we may consider the first modern western scholar to document Christian churches in Egypt, he is not the first to do so. Abu Salih the Armenian wrote The churches and monasteries of Egypt and some neighbouring countries in the 13th-century. He travelled extensively across Egypt and described the Copts, their history and their churches; his description of the churches is rather limited however, therefore Alfred Butler should be considered the first 'modern' scholar who gives a full and complete description on the churches of Egypt.

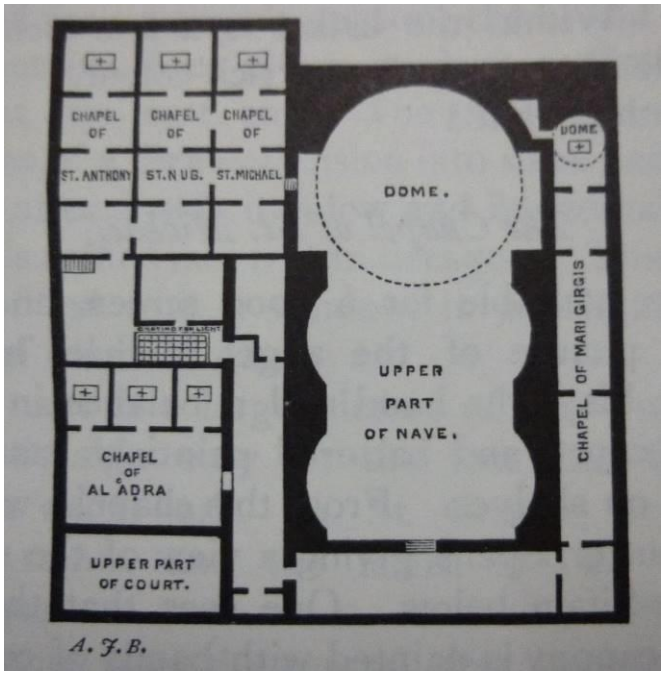

Fig 1.7: Original plan of Abu Sefein by Alfred Butler (Butler 1884: 119).

Although archaeological excavations on Coptic sites continued in the first half of the 20th-century, it was not until John Cooney published a series of works (1943-1944) examining the art and architecture of the Copts that Coptic history was re-evaluated; he noted at the time that Coptic art produced few spectacular works of art (1944: 38). His viewpoint was not challenged until the resurgence in Coptic studies in the 1970's and 1980's when Pierre Du Bourguet (1971) published perhaps one of the most in depth and complete analysis of Coptic architecture where he refuted these claims (although not Cooney specifically) and was sympathetic to the claims that Coptic art never produced any art which was worthwhile. He concluded that although the art of the Copts was derivative, so was most art. The 1970's saw the re-emergence of the study of Christian churches, something missing since the early 20th-century. Christopher Walters' *Monastic Archaeology in Egypt* (Walters 1974), was a general study in monastic archaeology and covered the early excavations of Kellia and the Red Sea Monasteries. It offered a breakdown of the types of churches found in the desert monasteries, building upon George Somers Clarke's earlier observations, although it was marred by poor illustrations and plans. Otto Meinardus (1925-2005), the German Coptologist has studied this area in his books *Monks and Monasteries of the Egyptian Deserts* (Meinardus 1961) and *Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity* (Meinardus 2000); his work has been cited by other scholars in such works as Massimo Capuani's *Christian Egypt: Coptic Art through Two Millennia* (Capuani 2002).

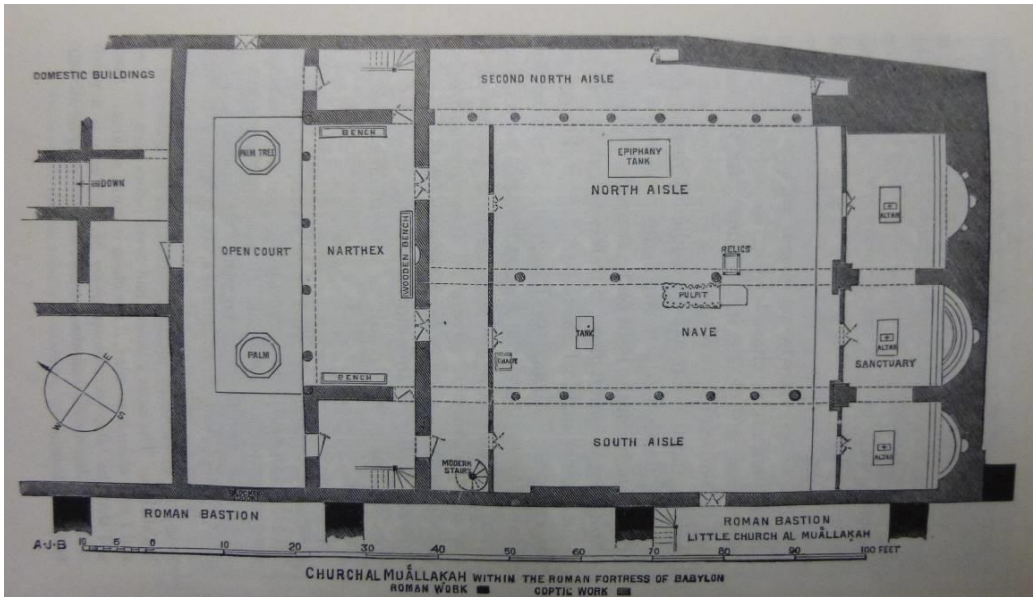

Fig 1.8: Original plan by Alfred Butler of Al Mu'allaqa (1884: 211).

Aside from these authors who study church archaeology and architecture, there have been a number of other journal series and conferences which have furthered study into Coptic heritage. In 1976 the first International Association for Coptic Studies (IACS) was created as a non-profit organisation, bringing together specialists from a wide range of fields including epigraphy, history and archaeology. This continues to this day with the most recent conference in 2016. In 1990 the IACS began to publish *The Journal of Coptic Studies*, this journal focuses upon a range of different specialisms including epigraphy, history, monasticism and on occasion archaeology. In the same year that the IACS was formed, the journal *Le Monde Copte* was created which, much like the IACS, published a broad selection of articles on a range of subjects relating to Coptic studies; indeed, after journal 13, *Le Monde Copte* devoted each issue to a different subject, including archaeology. In 1991, The *Coptic Encyclopaedia* was produced; this publication is a hugely important reference guide, although it is quite out of date now. It is still an excellent starting point for any scholar wishing to study a particular subject and covers a wide range of topics written by their relevant specialists. Each monastery, church and archaeological site are referenced, as is church architecture, and historical figures. It is important to recognise that while these journals publish articles relating to Coptic studies, the study of the Copts falls between epigraphy, theology, linguistics and papyrology; archaeology as a whole is very much a minor aspect of these studies.

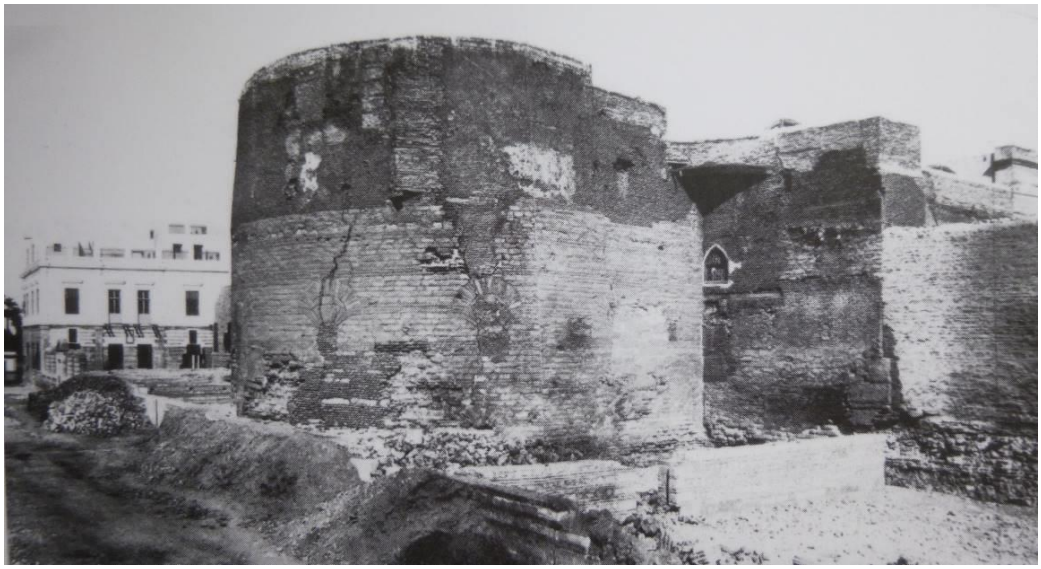

Fig 1.9: Photograph of the South gate of Babylon by George Somers-Clarke c. 1892 (Sheehan 2010: 124).

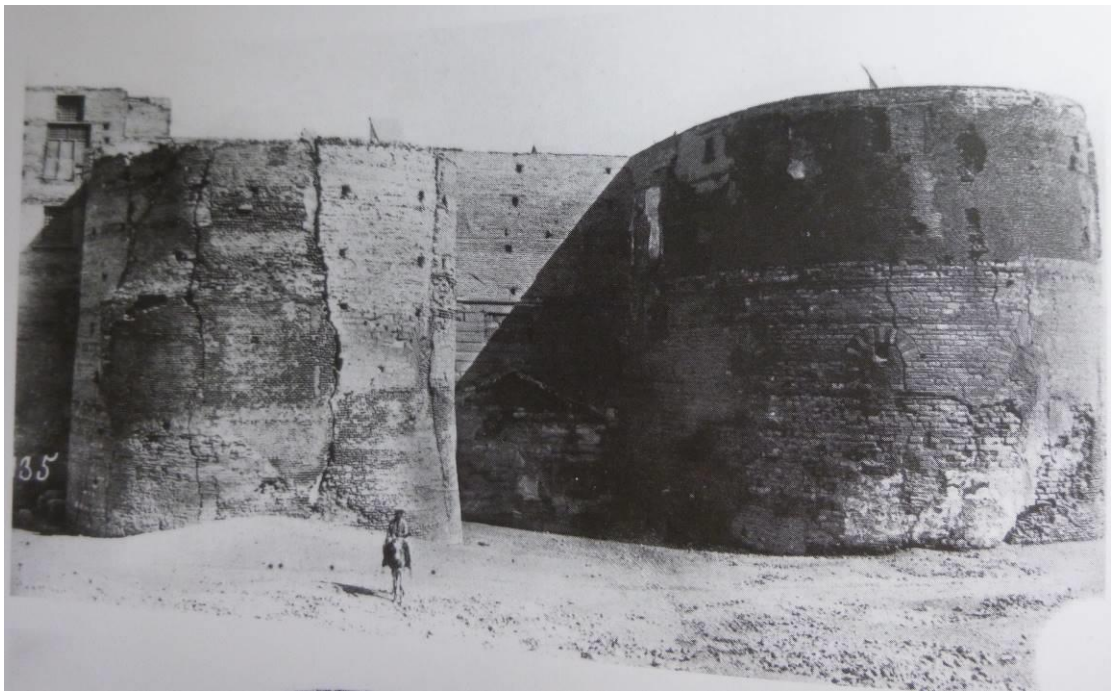

Fig 1.10: Photograph by George Somers-Clarke of Al Mu'allaqa (Sheehan 2010: 124)

The greatest contributor to Coptic archaeology and in particular the field of church archaeology in recent years is the German archaeologist Peter Grossmann. He has been active in the field since the early 1970's when he studied the floor plan of the eastern church at Philae (1970). He was joint director with D.M Bailey, of excavations at the south church at Hermopolis Magna (1994), Faw Qibli (1986) and has been excavating the UNESCO world heritage site of Abu Mina since the late 1980's and

published the excavation monograph *Abu Mina 1, Die Gruftkirche und die Gruft* in 1989. Aside from the excavations he is the most prolific scholar in Coptology and has written many journal articles on architectural elements such as the introduction of the Khurus (Bema), as well as more general ones on the differences in floor layout of churches between upper and lower Egypt. Since the early 1990's there has been a marked increase in the amount of scholarly work being completed on Coptic subjects, aside from Grossmann there have been notable archaeological works by Darlene Brooks-Hedstrom (Brooks-Hedstrom 2005) who is currently excavating the White Monastery at Sohag; she has contributed articles to the development of church archaeology also. The American Research Centre in Egypt performs many restorative efforts and archaeological surveys of Coptic monasteries; in particular, Elizabeth Bolman has notably worked to conserve the icons painted on the walls of the church in the monastery of St Antony (Bolman 2002), while William Lyster has conducted excavations on the cave hermitage of St Paul at the Monastery of St Paul, near to the Red Sea (*The Cave Church of Paul the Hermit at the Monastery of St Paul in Egypt* (Lyster 2008).

Other than Peter Grossmann and the work by ARCE, the Dutch archaeologist Karel Innemee has worked extensively at the monasteries of Deir Suryani and al-Baramus in the Wadi Natrun, supported by the University of Leiden, Netherlands. He has directed excavations at the monastery of al-Baramus since 1996, which have uncovered many elements of the original monastery including a church structure and evidence of defensive walls dating to the 9th or 10th-centuries. His work at Deir Suryani focused upon the protection and conservation of the wall paintings in the Church of the Virgin, which date between the 17th and 13th-centuries. This conservation project, much like those performed by ARCE have focused on cleaning and restoring previously hidden and damaged wall paintings. Aside from Karel Innemee and the work supported by the University of Leiden, Polish archaeologists have worked at Kom el-Dikka in Alexandria to uncover the auditorium and lecture halls of a Roman-Christian settlement. The important archaeological excavation has led to the creation of The Archaeological Park Project where the site will be preserved and presented as an archaeological tourist site that can be walked around and visited. The foregoing review indicates that the material and historical study of the ancient Christian communities of Egypt is very much a niche subject, and one which still has its roots in 'Orientalist' tastes of the nineteenth century. In summary, then, scholarly interest in the

archaeology of Egypt's Christian heritage, very much a forgotten heritage, remains vital.

1.4 Aims, scope and methods of the study

The central 'problem' then which is addressed in this thesis (or more accurately, a series of problems) is that here we have a relatively unknown cultural patrimony that is eclipsed in popular and academic thought by pyramids and tombs, and one which has important ideological significance, one which is part of a wider continuum of religious Christian heritage at risk within the Islamic world and one which requires careful management and presentation and interpretation. This is not a topic which has been widely addressed. As we will see from the varied strands of literature reviews in the relevant chapters, the overwhelming focus of Egyptian heritage management planning and policy is on Pharaonic sites. This is to be expected; these are great tourist revenues earners for the country. They match tourist expectations. It is hoped that this work will demonstrate that there is another hidden heritage of Egypt that demands our attention, but it also needs our help too.

The explicit aims of the present study are to assess the current state of a representative selection of Coptic Christian heritage sites in Egypt, and as a primary outcome, offer a conservation and management plan for the sites which could form the basis of a centralised Church strategy for the care and promotion of its heritage. In addition to current political and social problems, there is the issue of tourism and how that can be managed, promoted and used to positively aid the Church in increasing its revenue, while not damaging its heritage. Although each site has differing management and conservative issues, the primary objectives for each of the case studies are to:

-Provide a written evaluation for each site based upon a visual examination of each architectural component such as walls and floors.

-Conduct a photographic survey of each site to document the current physical state of each feature (walls, floor, etc).

-Provide a detailed background to each site using all available historical sources.

-Detail what is actually significant about the site, and what may or may not be altered according to the Coptic liturgical demands.

-Offer tangible ways for conservative remedial action for any damage which has been wrought upon the site.

In order to reach this end point, however, it is essential to provide a deeper contextual study as to the role and meaning of heritage within an Egyptian and global context. In order to do this, wider debates and frameworks of analysis are introduced. Critiques of heritage policy development, heritage theory, praxis and economic implications are offered. The intention is to move from the global analysis, to Egypt and more specifically to Coptic Christian heritage. The recording methodology at each of chosen sites was conducted using the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and guidance for the archaeological investigation and recording of standing buildings of structures* (2014). The primary recording method during these case studies was by using a photographic survey, with full and proper written records kept as appropriate (2014: 12). Photographs were taken of all major architectural elements of each site, including walls, flooring, pillars and religious architectural ornaments. In general, wide shots were taken of each area of site with more detailed photographs of architectural detail such as pediments, artistic designs and architectural iconography. In conjunction with a photographic record of each architectural element, a written record was also made using pro-forma context sheets. These context sheets were used to record individual elements; measurements were taken, materials used in construction, mortar type, and how these parts of the site interact with other areas of the site. The current state of disrepair was recorded between the photographs and the context sheets and any details that were salient to its repair were recorded. A pre-drawn scaled plan of the church/site were used to record where each photograph was recorded, the direction it was taken and given an individual photographic number. A photographic register was retained which recorded each photo's number, direction and a short description of what it is.

The sites that form the case studies in this thesis were chosen as a cross representative selection of Coptic heritage sites in Egypt. Haret Zuwaila is an urban church, The Monastery of St Paul is a Red Sea living heritage monastic site and Abu

Mina is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Combined these sites cover all 'types' of Coptic heritage site in Egypt except perhaps burial sites. Haret Zuwaila was chosen due to its unique conservation issues and is currently one of the most at risk churches in Cairo of irreversible damage. For this reason, it was thought best to use this as a prime example of a church situated in a populated city and how urban influences such as pollution can affect heritage sites. The Monastery of St Paul, like Haret Zuwaila, is a living heritage site that alongside The Monastery of St Antony are the only surviving Red Sea Monasteries. This monastery had previously undergone limited reconstruction efforts by The American Research Centre in Egypt (ARCE) in the mid 2000's and would provide an excellent chance to reappraise their work and to evaluate whether there were further interventions that could be made to consolidate the monastery. In addition, an invitation was offered by Father Arsenios, former Coptic Priest of Manchester, who provided access to areas of the monastery not open to the general public; this was an excellent opportunity to study a locally important monastery, where full access was not normally given.

At this point, it is prudent to discuss the methodology behind the selection of each site within this thesis. The methodology employed was a mixture of pre-discussion with individual members of the Coptic Church, pragmatism in availability of these sites (gaining access to them) and prior evaluative work on the current issues faced at these Coptic heritage sites. When choosing which sites to provide a conservation assessment, the most important deciding factor was a discussion with members of the Coptic Church to determine which sites in the local area had conservation issues that were important to them as a minority group. Once a site had been identified as suffering from conservation issues, some background research was required to delve into the history of the site and if any prior work has occurred or is planned in the future. Finally, the issue of access and danger of travelling to the site was one which informed part of the decision to choose the specific sites in the thesis.

The aim of the thesis was to provide conservation plans for a cross-section of Coptic heritage sites across Egypt, and with this aim in mind, three distinct types of Coptic site can be identified across Egypt; urban churches, desert monasteries and large monumental church complexes. A final fourth group of sites are burial sites, but it was determined early in the writing of this project that studying these proposed a set of ethical and legal challenges that were insurmountable within the confines of this

project, namely access and permission were not forthecoming from the Ministry of Antiquities.

The urban church of Haret Zuwaila was decided upon through discussion with members of the local Egyptian Cairo Coptic community, who cited the church complex of Haret Zuwaila as an urban church with many conservation issues that needed investigation, and one which required immediate conservation intervention before the churches in Old Cairo. Through background study of this site, it was clear that it fulfilled the criteria for a medieval urban church and was an excellent candidate for a conservation study. Firstly, it is a historic medieval church with a rich history and tangible link to the local community. It is still in use and visited daily by the local Copts and is therefore not purely a tourist destination. Secondly, background research determined that the church had endemic issues with water damage with a series of conservation interventions had occurred prior to this study. This provided an excellent site to assess the current state of conservation and to provide a critique of the techniques used by local Egyptian conservators and whether international charters were being adhered to, such as the retention of authenticity. Other churches within the Fortress of Babylon were considered for inclusion in this thesis but ultimately it was decided that the large amount of problems at Haret Zuwaila and its use as a local church, not a large tourist destination such as Al'Muallaqa would provide a good perspective against the other sites in the thesis.

While there are sufficient amounts of desert monasteries still in active use in Egypt, particularly in the Wadi Natrun area, it was decided that the Red Sea monastery of St Paul best fit the criteria required for this thesis to provide a good counter balance to the urban church and monumental World Heritage site. One of the largest determining factors was the amount of access given by local priest Father Arsenios, former Coptic priest of Manchester, England. The monastery also fit the criteria of a consistently used site by the local Copts and as a tourist destination from holidaymakers staying at the local resort of Hugurda. Preliminary background research of the monastery and discussions with Father Arsenios suggested that although conservation work had already been enacted upon some of the buildings at the monastery and at the cave church, a full conservation study had not been completed and would provide opportunity to critique the types of remedial work undertaken at Coptic heritage sites in Egypt.

The final site chosen to be studied in this thesis was required to provide a counter balance to the previous 'living' heritage sites. The site of Abu Mena was a UNESCO World Heritage site that acted primarily as a large tourist site. Crucially, it was not a 'living' heritage site like Haret Zuwaila and the monastery of St Paul. It provided a much deeper exploration of the World Heritage management systems and how they interact with the Egyptian national government and local Coptic Church of Mar Mena. It was hoped that the extra level of UNESCO involvement would provide a different process of management to focus upon and that this would present unique challenges to be overcome. Abu Mina is an extremely large site and it was decided to focus on the central ecclesiastical complex and nearby pilgrim housing rather than documenting the whole site which would have taken a few weeks with a small team of people. The ruinous nature of Abu Mena provided a set of issues not found at the desert monasteries or urban churches.

The methodology to determining which elements of each site to focus the photographic survey upon was decided by discussion with the clergy at each Coptic site, for example Father Arsenios at the Monastery of St Paul was consulted to determine what the church believed to be conservation issues. In this example, he suggested the defensive walls had some issues with improper conservation which needed to be addressed. Their input formed an important aspect in deciding what elements to focus upon. The second selection criteria was through prior study of written sources of each site to determine what parts are significant to the Copts, such as using 20th-century *Comité* reports to determine what prior work was completed at the site. Culturally sensitive areas of sites were the focal point of the case studies, and any area which was deemed to be significant by the local Copts was focused upon. In addition, any area that had significant damage or had received previous conservation interventions was chosen to be part of the case study.

The largest problem encountered during the undertaking of this research was the issue of access to these heritage sites post-January 2011 uprising. Travel to Egypt between 2011 and mid 2015 was incredibly dangerous with riots in Cairo and travel via desert roads unadvisable due to bandits on the roads. However, two trips were made during this period during relative lulls in violence, but this has meant that proposed follow up visits have not come to fruition. Owing to the dynamic nature of some of the conservation issues presented in this thesis, it is possible that some of the issues raised

in the case studies may have been remedied; this is unavoidable and a direct consequence of the limit of safe travel across Egypt.

1.5 Structure of the study

The thesis is structured in the following manner: Chapter two will focus upon Egyptian heritage policy within a global context, focusing on the development of Egyptian cultural heritage management legislation and how this compares to England. England has a rich and well documented (and well critiqued) history of protecting its monuments through varying legislation which has been implemented throughout the late 19th and 20th-century. This chapter examines the role in which both the varying heritage agencies such as Historic England and the independent, non-governmental organisations such as the National Trust and the Council for British Archaeology play in protecting heritage sites across England. The introduction of PPG16 in 1990 was an important step in integrating archaeology into the building industry. Egypt in comparison has very few heritage protection laws and a number of problems which need to be addressed. This is not to suggest that the English experience is a paragon of perfect heritage practice, but the present author has had extensive experience of working within that sector. He is more familiar with this framework and is aware of its strength and weaknesses and the potential it offers for signposting directions in Egyptian antiquities legislation relating specifically to the management of historic Christian sites. It offers a useful basis of comparison.

Chapter three takes a more theoretical and philosophical turn, and deals with the ambiguous term 'significance' in heritage practice. Significance is an integral part of any heritage management plan and is used in England and further afield. It can take different incarnations and it is important to define what it actually means in the context of Coptic heritage. Within this debate there are the contrasting idioms of local versus the global heritage and who actually owns a site- if anyone can in fact stake such a claim-. This is an important argument to air in the realms of ‘faith heritage’ and its management and interpretation. Understanding heritage is a hermeneutic process, not a linear and deductive one. It requires reflection and self-evaluation, and this is especially pertinent in the case of looking at a minority Christian heritage which is at risk.

Chapter four deals with the varying strategies for dealing with conservation of buildings (again drawing mainly upon English practice); it attempts to define the different processes involved in remedial action and to offer salient test cases where both excellent and poor conservative work has taken place. The emphasis here is on praxis. The first act must be to define what we mean by the terms conservation, preservation and reconstruction. Without a clear definition there cannot be a clearly defined heritage plan for each site. The chapter looks at the erosion of authenticity, an often cited problem within conservative circles, and what impact this may have on a heritage site. All conservative efforts, and in particular, reconstruction and renovation can have an impact on authenticity and it is important to study whether the ends justify the means in some cases. The chapter offers a number of remedies towards this problem and uses test cases from across the globe to prove that these methods can work if properly implemented. Finally, the use of consolidant chemicals within the conservative process is discussed; there are both positive and negative side effects from using chemicals and these are explored fully in the chapter. These issues will of course have relevance in the main case study chapters and will have important practical and financial implications for the development of the final suggested management and conservation plan for standing Coptic Christian monuments in Egypt. Above all, it is emphssised that this approach has to be cost effective and sustainable within an Egyptian context.

Chapter five examines the relatively recent development of heritage tourism and the effects it can have at heritage sites in Egypt. This is where we try to situate the role of the heritage ‘consumer’. It explores the different types of tours which are available to tourists and what exactly the phenomenon of heritage tourism actually is and how it differs from previous holidays, this is perhaps best examined in John Urry's *the Tourist Gaze* (2002). It also examines the types of people who venture on these getaways. The types of damage which can be caused by mass visitors at heritage sites is looked at and ways of managing the vast amount of tourists are explored, with non-invasive techniques forming the backbone of the argument. Physical wear and tear is a real concern at heritage sites and it must be controlled. The second half of the chapter explores the theme of visitor satisfaction and what makes a visit a fulfilling one; to examine this idea further, Gianna Moscardo's 'mindfullness' theory (Moscardo 2002) is visited to determine whether having a non passive and active tourist site is the ideal path to follow and if it stops visitors from being bored and in turn teach them about

the history of the site, culture and impart knowledge, so they leave having gained knowledge of the Copts. These issues are important to clarify and discuss, as there are many tourists who come to Egypt and do visit Coptic heritage sites; their needs and wants are clearly important if they are to have a pleasant visit but there does need to be a balance; they cannot do whatever they like at the site and therefore there must be ways of limiting the impact of their visit. Therefore, this chapter forms a partial link back to chapter four in that it is examining ways of preserving the site using non-invasive techniques but also moves forward in the very important debate over how best to present the site to visitors. There then follows three site-based case studies which build upon the contextual overviews presented in chapters one to five.

Chapter six presents the first case study which is based upon my primary fieldwork in Egypt in 2012. The study focuses on the Church complex of Haret Zuwaila, which comprises the churches of Al Adra (Church of the Virgin Mary), Abu Sefain Church and the convent of St Girgios (St George) in Cairo. This case study examines the history of the churches and examines all historical data known to try and form a detailed historical background to the site. One of the main aims is to examine each individual architectural feature in the churches including the walls, floor, and pillars. A detailed description of their current state will be accompanied by a photographic survey to highlight any conservation and management issues. Finally, an assessment of the past remedial action and and if there can be any improvements to the maintenance, conservation and running of the site will be offered. This case study is important as Haret Zuwaila is one of only a handful of historic churches with Cairo and its deterioration affects not only the wider archaeological community but also the local Copts who pray and worship there.

Chapter seven examines the monastery of St Paul, situated next to the Red Sea. The case study offers a contrast to the church site of Haret Zuwaila discussed in the preceding chapter as it differs in scale and function. This chapter examines the history of the site, from its foundations in the 4th-century, up until the construction of modern buildings in the 20th-century. There are many extant buildings which have grown up around the original cave church of St Paul including a mill, tower (or Kasr) and monastic cells. All of these buildings will be studied to determine whether a date can be ascertained, and what their overall significance is to the local Coptic community, to visitors and to scholarly study. It will examine the latent conservation issues such as

the rising water table which is destroying the frescoes within the Church of St Mercurius, the re-pointing of the historic defensive walls and the impact tourism has had on the monastery. The chapter examines what can be improved from a tourism perspective and whether management can be improved at the site.

Chapter eight examines the World Heritage Site of Abu Mina. Again, this is another contrasting site, being a historical rather than living place of worship, and being a large pilgrimage centre dating from late antiquity. The case study examines the problems facing the 4th-century ruins; these include rising water damage to the foundations of the walls. Abu Mena has many complex management issues and has been at the centre of a disagreement with the Ministry of State for Antiquities over ownership. As it is a UNESCO Heritage Site, this also brings another facet of management to the site where standards must be maintained and international charters must be adhered to. The case study is a good comparison with the others in this thesis as it is not a site which is currently in use by the local Coptic community, it is a 4th-century Roman city which sprang up around the monumental church and is now in a ruinous state. Therefore, it is a good comparison to the living monastery of St Paul and the urban churches of Cairo which are still in use; it will have different problems and tourism issues. The chapter also examines the damage and improper conservation efforts of previous management plans and looks to ways of addressing these previous poorly enacted plans.

Chapter nine concludes this thesis and summarises the main themes running throughout this PhD. It will examine if there are general issues which are prevalent at all Coptic heritage sites and whether there is anything which may be done to alleviate the problems in the long term. It examines the main threats to Christian heritage sites which are visible across the country and have been recorded at each site such as water damage from the rising water table, vandalism, improper conservation techniques and general mismanagement, and what safeguards can be put in place to ensure these problems do not occur again, and offers ideas for the promotion and protection of a heritage that really is very much at risk and which has all manner of significance to varied stakeholders.

Chapter 2 - The heritage policy context: England, Egypt and the world

2.1 Heritage Legislation in England: The Ancient Monuments Act to Historic England

This chapter focuses and explores heritage policy in both England and Egypt. England has a rich history of heritage legislation and this should be discussed in relation to the Egyptian model; by doing so, this will illuminate any shortcomings and problems within the Egyptian heritage sphere and will hopefully showcase some ways in which these issues may be overcome in the future. This discourse is required in order to provide a context to the types of problems that Coptic heritage sites face, and which may be represented in each of the case studies presented in this thesis. Firstly, there is a need to provide some much-needed background to heritage legislation in England and how this has developed since the late 19th-century (this is not to suggest that English heritage policy is a paragon, it is however well established, detailed and familiar to the author).

The concept of a monument in England (in the modern sense) dates back to 1882 with the *Monument Protection Act* (MPA) (Cleere 1984: 54; Gillman 2010: 142; Breeze 1993: 44), this is the beginning in England of what John Carman has termed 'monument guardianship' (2002: 49); the act created the position of Inspector (the first was General Pitt Rivers), someone who would travel the country ensuring its historic monuments were not being damaged and if they were in some way vandalised or removed, gave the Government powers to fine those who had caused damage to these historic monuments.[6] Before this act was passed a number of societies had been formed by philanthropists, who, angered and saddened over 'restorations' of buildings and wanting to protect the nation's heritage, created the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (1877), and the John Kyrle Society (1876), both forerunners of the National Trust, among others. One of the oldest societies concerned with studying the

[6] Before this important cornerstone in English legislation, there were no legal ramifications for destroying historic buildings, only the dedication of architects such as John Ruskin and preservation societies such as the John Kyrle Society had previously brought preservation of historic buildings into public consciousness. The Monuments Protection Act could therefore be classed as the start of 'nationalisation' of heritage.

past was the Society of Antiquaries of London (1718), who were instrumental in supporting the 1882 act by helping to lobby parliament (Murray 2008: 164) and even helped to form the initial list of protected sites. The MPA of 1882 was the first-time protection was enshrined in law by Government.

The Act was not an immediate success, with General Pitt Rivers becoming disillusioned over the lack of governmental support (Emerick 2014: 54), yet even though it was considered a failure, it was supported enough to be updated with the *Ancient Monuments Act* in 1913 which allowed for the Government to issue preservation orders to protect monuments in immediate danger from damage and it was the first time a historic building or monument could be scheduled; by 1933 the Government were responsible for the upkeep of 273 historic sites (English Heritage NDa). This idea of a monument or building deemed so important to national identity or to have historical significance is perpetuated today with over 20,000 monuments and buildings on the scheduled list (Dept Culture, Media and Sport 2013: 13). The post-World War Two period saw amendments and more protection for historic buildings with the *Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act*, passed in 1953. The important powers this act gave the government was the ability to give grants to non-governmental historic societies such as the National Trust, to aid them in the conservation and protection of historic buildings. It also gave them the ability to acquire or lease any building or land with significant historic value (Thurley 2013: 211). This was a significant change in how the Government approached protecting historic buildings and monuments; rather than taking them into permanent ownership they could repair and re-sell the historic buildings (Thurley 2013: 212).

The post-war period saw the rebuilding of historic structures and with it an acknowledgement that many historic buildings were destroyed in the Blitz; the older buildings which had survived were now a rarity. Urban planning in the pre-world war two period was limited, with only a few local authorities in England having planning schemes in operation (De Smith 1948: 72). A zoning system had been employed since 1909 (Davies 1998: 137; Everill 2012: 20), extended in the first *Town and Country Planning Act* of 1932; zoning was an official plan which allowed developers to build upon land rather than the government granting approval to each individual project to develop new structures (Davies 1998: 136). As Paul Everill points out, the 1943-44 *Town and Country Planning Acts* were concerned with the rebuilding of areas badly

damaged by the war (Everill 2012: 21). The decentralisation of planning that was the norm was redacted with the introduction of the 1947 *Town and Country Planning Act*; its main aim was to consolidate the ability of central government to control what buildings were to be developed and to increase the powers of the local planning authority (De Smith 1948: 77). The act ensured that planning was centralised (Clark 1951: 90), that the preservation of natural areas of woodland, buildings of special architectural and historical interest were to be protected (De Smith 1948: 77), and most importantly it increased public control over land use (Wendt 1949: 428).

Successor legislation, the 1971 *Town and Planning Act* introduced two important powers which gave the local planning authority the ability to confer preservation notices upon buildings if it was deemed historically or architecturally important and gave inspectors the right to stop any demolition work immediately. It had its history in the growing public anger over the loss of many historic buildings such as the Euston Arch in London to building development. The 1971 legislation gave inspectors more power to protect historic buildings and although the idea of listed buildings existed since 1947, it was not until the *Planning Act (Listed Buildings/Conservation Areas)* 1990, that protection of historic buildings was increased and clarified; it subsumed all prior legislation concerning the protection of historic buildings, setting out the process for listing a building and created a grading system to which varying amounts of alteration were allowed to be performed. It also created an appeals procedure and the ability to apply directly to the local planning department for listing building consent. Although these acts gave increasing amounts of control over England's historic buildings and monuments, the creation of English Heritage in 1983 was a huge step forward in managing England's vast historic patrimony.

Governmental control of the heritage industry and policy was increased by the introduction of the 1983 *National Heritage Act*. Crucially, this act formed the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, known up until April 2015 as English Heritage[7] and now as Historic England. English Heritage was created as a non-departmental public body (i.e. Quasi-Autonomous Non-Governmental Organisation aka

[7] While English Heritage protects heritage sites in England, other countries within the United Kingdom have their own organisations which look after their heritage assets. In Wales, the Welsh Office created Cadw, while Scotland has Historic Scotland, and Northern Ireland has Historic Northern Ireland. Historic England has no power over each of these organisations and they are controlled by the individual countries government.

QUANGO) by Michael Heseltine in 1983. Prior to this QUANGO being created, the Department of the Environment oversaw all legislation and day to day running of heritage matters. The idea was to have a specialised department which oversaw the running and management of heritage sites, could offer dedicated advice to the Secretary of State regarding scheduled monument consent matters (Redman 1990: 90) and was run by a government appointed commission who oversaw direction of the organisation (English Heritage NDb). Being semi-autonomous meant that it is funded partly through government aid and partly through membership fees and money gained through visitors to their historic properties. Since April 2015, English Heritage has been divided into two separate entities; English Heritage has now assumed the role of a charitable organisation which acts as steward to national heritage sites and monuments in England; it currently looks after 420 different monuments such as Rochester Castle, Stonehenge, and Hadrian's Wall. Funding from the government will continue on a decreasing scale until 2022/3 and they were given a lump sum of £80m in April 2015 to allow English Heritage to maintain the upkeep of these monuments (DCMS 2013b). The public body, Historic England has now been formed to assume the role of governmental advisor in all matters of heritage.

The remit of Historic England is quite broad, encompassing a role as advisor to both the Government, local authorities and the public, but also as an educator, provider of up-to-date best practice guides and a guardian of a vital database of key historic sites in England. One of its primary remits (and arguably its most important role) is to act as 'statutory advisor' to the Government; they advise the Government on all forms of legislation pertaining to the historic environment and have significant input into consultations taken by the government; for example, English Heritage gave feedback to the consultations for the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) citing many areas of concern in relation ot the wording of the proposed legislation (English Heritage 2011). Often they provide responses to parliamentary inquiries that may have an impact upon the historic environment; in 2012 English Heritage provided a response supporting the implementation and improvement of sustainable building practices citing the importance of repair and maintenance of heritage assets (English Heritage 2012). Their advice and recommendations therefore hold weight within parliament and often their recommendations are implemented into legislation; this is evident with the amendments taken on board in the final draft of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This role as advisor to the government is not the only role it

performs, however.

In addition to advising the government, they also provide guidance to the general public and in particular will advise on over 20,000 planning applications each year (Historic England NDa). While Historic England advise the government on legislation, they offer support and information to the local planning authorities on the best course of action when dealing with both the excavation of important archaeological sites and the alteration of historic monuments which may be either listed buildings or scheduled monuments. Historic England can affect building developer's planning proposals and reject them if they are going to cause unnecessary damage to a proposed area of development and force them to modify their plans (Redman 1990: 90). Their advice has been followed in several high profile cases, for example, the development of wind turbines at Asfordby near to Melton was rejected by the Secretary of State after a court of appeal judgement, as it would negatively impact the grade I listed Lyvedon New Bield nearby (Planning Resource 2014).

Their advice is of course not only limited to those wishing to build new developments, but also members of the public who may own a designated heritage asset or a listed building and may wish to alter the fabric. It is this role as an educator to both the public and heritage specialists that Historic England have really excelled; they have published many different guides aimed at informing specialists and those producing relevant reports, Environmental Impact Assessment Reports or Desk Based Assessments. These *Introductions to Heritage Assets* are divided into both archaeology and buildings, and further sub-divided into guides about individual archaeological features such as Banjo enclosures, and Pre-Industrial lime kilns for example. In addition to providing these introductory guides to historic monuments, they too have a role in providing the most up to date best practice guides, the current guidance documents are *Conservation Principles, Policy and Guidance* (2008), *Principles of Selection of Listed Buildings* (2010) and *The Scheduled Monuments Policy Statement* (2013b). These provide heritage specialists and organisations with guidelines on how to approach the conservation, repair and maintenance of a selected heritage asset and to provide guidance for those preparing conservation plans and assigning significance. These guidelines are produced in conjunction with a National Heritage List for England (NHLE), a searchable database of all 'designated' sites in England. Designation covers listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks and registered parks,

gardens and battlefields (Historic England NDb). They also operate another database called the English Heritage Archive (previously called the National Monuments Record). This database can be accessed by both heritage specialists and members of the public and enables anyone to search catalogue entries held in their public archive (Historic England 2016). It is evident that Historic England plays a crucial role in both the education of the public and advising the government on heritage projects, but England has a number of other smaller independent groups and charities within the English heritage sector which also demand consideration.

Aside from Historic England and English Heritage, England has a number of independent organisations which both own and manage historic properties; the largest of these organisations is the National Trust. Formed in 1895 by socialist reformers Octavia Hill, Robert Hunter and Hardwicke Rawnsley, it developed as an amalgamation of smaller localised preservation initiatives such as the *John Kyrle Society* and *The Society for the Preservation of Historic Buildings* (originally created to combat the improper restorations of historic churches). It not only owns historic properties but many parts of the coastline and many natural areas of beauty. The National Trust holds a very important role in the preservation and display of English historic properties; successive governments have recognised this importance by passing successive legislative acts which have granted the trust numerous powers. The first was the 1907 *National Trust Act* which introduced an inalienability clause (*National Trust Act Clause 21 (1)*. This has been interpreted as giving ownership of the properties it buys, but also the sole responsibility of sustaining them, importantly, the National Trust cannot sell these properties without the consent of Parliament (Nicholls 1998: 377). Successive National Trust Acts were passed in 1919, 1937, 1939, 1953 and 1971, each of these giving the trust more power and responsibilities. Effectively, the government do not technically own the properties, but they have a controlling stake over much of England's built heritage. It is not the only significant heritage organisation in England, others such as the Council for British Archaeology have an equally important, albeit different, role within the heritage sector.

The other important national non-governmental body in the English heritage sector is the Council of British Archaeology (CBA). Formed in 1944, its inaugural president Cyril Fox wrote an open letter in the anthropological magazine *MAN* in 1944 which disclosed the fact they had been in consultation with Society of Antiquaries since

1942 over a perceived threat to archaeological remains (Fox 1945: 24). It was essentially borne out of a need for a centralised group who could coordinate fieldwork, direct volunteers to local digs and societies and could campaign on behalf of topical issues. The CBA has played an important part in protesting against the demolition and destruction of historic towns (Thomas 1974: 12). For example, in 1996 they joined environmental groups to protest the proposed Newbury bypass (Skeates 200: 66). Its primary focus however, was amateur excavations (Bland 2004: 273) and introducing new volunteers to these digs. Indeed, John Hunter and Ian Ralston (1993: 51) report that the CBA traditionally viewed archaeology as an amateur pastime which it co-ordinated. Clearly it has had a positive impact upon archaeological fieldwork in England since the Second World War. Of course these are not the only non-governmental heritage organisations; others include the Institute for Archaeologists (IFA), Rescue, and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC).

Egyptian heritage could learn much from the output of Historic England and how they operate, although the Ministry of Antiquities is comparable, it does not provide written guidance, nor does it educate the public. The lack of heritage organisations working in Egypt only adds to this lack of education. The nearest equivalency would be the American Research Centre in Egypt (ARCE); a professional organisation funded partly through membership and also through United States Aid (USAID), or the Egypt Exploration Society (EES). Other organisations include Egyptian Cultural Heritage Organisation (ECHO), Centre for Documentation of Cultural and Natural Heritage (CULTNAT) and NEHRA, a collective of Coptic businessmen who fund conservation projects on Coptic heritage sites. It must be made clear that aside from NEHRA and CULTNAT, these groups are all foreign owned and run, there are currently very few Egyptian run heritage organisations. The main issue ultimately is one of financial resourcing.

2.2 Heritage legislation specifically relating to places of worship in England

Given the direction of this thesis, it is important to examine in some detail the English approach to the conservation and management of religious heritage assets. Ecclesiastical buildings in England are distinct from other heritage assets in that they are afforded some exemption from the planning process, no other agency has responsibility over these buildings welfare (Carman 2002: 106). The first exemption

enshrined in law was the *Ancient Monuments, Consolidation and Amendment Act* in 1913; since implementation of this act the Church of England has been expected to maintain their own built heritage (Thurley 2013: 226). Unfortunately, by the 1940's neglect and damage from the Blitz led to a selection of 50 of the best examples of historic churches being gifted back to Ancient Monuments Department (Thurley 2013: 227). The most recent and pertinent legislative acts are the *Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure* 1991 and *The Ecclesiastical Exemption (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) England Order* 2010. The church buildings are not exempt from the planning process but are exempt from obtaining listed building consent for alterations to a church that is in use (Historic England NDc), although any alteration to the outside fabric still requires planning permission. For a religious denomination to be exempt from listed building consent they must demonstrate they have an internal system of control that is of the same standard of the secular system. The *Care of Churches and Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction Measure* 2010 set out the role of the Diocesan Advisory Committee (1991: 2.1); this is a committee which decides what actions are necessary for the upkeep, repair and conservation of the churches within its diocese. This allows for a group decision over how to proceed and does not allow a sole person to decide whether to take action, thus mitigating potential harm. A further control measure which limits potential harm is the requirement to obtain a 'faculty' (essentially a licence) from the chancellor of the diocesan court. It is during this time that this petition for a faculty that Historic England may be consulted and can be opened to the public for their views.

The legislation is designed to allow each of the main denominations of Christian religious organisations to essentially govern and maintain their own patrimony without excessive interference from the secular department of planning and Hisstoric England. The system has built in checks and balances and must have an internal procedure that can robustly deal with altering historic fabric. One person cannot decide to alter the fabric, it must be an open and transparent process within the diocese, with the views of the public and specialists put forward in the proposal. Saliently, any alterations to the exterior of an ecclesiastical building must apply for planning permission and Historic England will be involved in this process, so although the religious organisations can perform limited alteration and extensions, and even demolitions, ultimately their autonomy is limited. It can be interpreted that the legislation passed was designed to streamline the process of expansion of church

buildings for the laity and was not designed so historic fabric could be wantonly removed. The comparable legislation in Egypt would be the *Waqf* laws where the Copts and Muslims would maintain their own churches and mosques; there are no legislative exemptions for these religious buildings however, and it is not an open and transparent process where many different views are acknowledged.

2.3 The impact of PPG 16 and successor legislation on planning and development

Having presented a broad overview of the development and role of Historic England in the English heritage policy sector, it is now important to consider the issue of planning and development and the role that commercial archaeology has played in the development of the heritage sector. Again, this is an important issue for Egyptian heritage policy to consider as well. One of the key goals of the present study is to offer useful pointers to the development of Egyptian sustainable heritage management plans, and in order for this to be effective we need to consider the issue of planning and development. Although the 1931 *Ancient Monuments Act* extended the protection over buried archaeological features, the excavation of archaeology before any new building or demolition work was not integrated into the planning process. This resulted in many archaeological sites being removed without proper excavation and thus losing the information forever. Redevelopment schemes in the 1960's were beginning to put the built historic environment at risk (Sheldon, Dennis and Densem 2015: XIII), and this obviously, this did not sit well with many archaeologists; angry with the lack of movement by the government to protect England's buried patrimony, a few individuals formed the pressure group RESCUE.

RESCUE was formed in 1971 as a pressure group which was borne out of the crisis; many sites were being demolished and they tackled this head on by lobbying parliament and forcibally fighting for change (Sheldon, Dennis and Densem 2015: XVII). Rescue archaeology continued in the 1970's with archaeologists performing hasty excavations in front of building work and government projects; often they were hired to perform work before large infrastructure projects took place (Lang 1992: 171), including the M5 motorway project (Fowler 1974: 124). By the 1980's a number of county and city archaeological units were created (Scrase 1991: 1), with many of the workforce hired through the Manpower Services Commision, a programme created to provide jobs and training for those unemployed for a long period; archaeology as Paul

Everill reports, was advertised heavily through this programme (Everill 2012: 24). By 1990, rescue archaeology had been recognised by certain local authorities as part of the legitimate development process (Redman 1990: 89), but before this transition to PPG16, there were no laws or legislation which forced the developers of a project to pay for archaeological work before construction began. Rescue archaeology's legacy should not be underestimated, they were crucial in the formation of what call today archaeological 'units' or companies and they undoubtedly saved many hundreds of sites from being completely destroyed; it is because of their hard work we at least know they existed and do have some limited written records and plans of them, but as some scholars have already pointed out, their early successes only slowed the crisis down (Everill 2012: 24).

This all changed in November 1990 with the introduction of *Planning and Policy Guidance 16* (PPG16). These documents formed the principle guidance for the governmental planning departments on land use and the wider planning system (Harris and Thomas 2004: 474). This legislation was the first-time archaeology was incorporated into the planning decision; it adopted the 'polluter pays' principle and was a guide for developers to let them know it was expected of them to determine whether there were significant archaeological remains where they planned to build and satisfy the planning authority (Scrase 1991: 3). As Joe Flatman and Dominic Perring succinctly framed the problem- as long as the local planning authority took on a conservation agenda, the developers had to pay for archaeological works (Flatman and Perring 2012: 4). It was the first piece of legislation, which as David Baker stated, showed a sign of archaeology's social maturity (Baker 1999: 16); it was now a fully formed profession rather than purely seen as a hobby.

The inclusion of archaeology into the planning process would not have worked had there not been an accurate system of archaeological records that could be accessed by specialists and the county planning departments when deciding what planning conditions to place upon a project, and when designing impact assessments and heritage management plans. England has a number of databases which catalogue all types of heritage sites recorded during previous works. The most important database used for this purpose is the Historic Environment Record (HER) (Flatman 2011: 136); these are centralised records offices that each county maintains. The HER is, as Joe Flatman saliently points out, essential for the smooth running of the planning

system (2001: 141), each vary in size and management, but are not a statutory requirement of local government. HER officers are employed to maintain and update these databases and deal with requests from heritage specialists, often sending the relevant data to them. Importantly, it is funded by local government who in recent years have cut funding to these important sources for heritage specialists. For example, the HER library for Greater Manchester was closed in 2012 (Rescue 2012), and Lancashire's office is now under threat of closure. The HER is not the only database that can be searched, Historic England maintain the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), a searchable database of all 'designated' sites in England. Designation covers listed buildings, scheduled monuments, protected wrecks and registered parks, gardens and battlefields (Historic England NDb). They also operate another database called the English Heritage Archive (previously called the National Monuments Record). This database can be accessed by both heritage specialists and members of the public and enables anyone to search catalogue entries held in their public archive (Historic England 2016). It should be made clear that these databases are vital to the ability of a smooth running and effective heritage sector; without them a vast amount of heritage sites would go unrecorded and improper conditions would be placed upon construction projects leading to the loss of a great deal of sites.

Bringing the discussion back to the inclusion of archaeology into the planning process, PPG16 was replaced by *Planning Policy Statement 5* in 2010. This was an improvement over PPG16 and actually set out the responsibilities of the developer, while increasing the scope of heritage to include areas of natural beauty (PPS5 2010: 16). It offered advice on how to assess the archaeological asset via a desk based assessment (PPS5 2010: 61) and by consulting local county record offices and Historic Environment Records (PPS5 2010: 27). It set out the established formula for excavation, stating that an archaeological evaluation will be required to determine scope of works (PPS5 2010: 62). Its passing into legislation was welcomed by all heritage specialists in all corners as an improvement over PPG16. It continued to force the developer to pay and it promoted the historic environment (Flatman and Perring 2012: 4) and was described as being 'revolutionary' by Peter Hinton (Hinton 2012: 13). This legislation was short lived and was replaced with *National Policy Planning Framework* (NPPF) in 2013. This regurgitated parts of PPS5 but saliently did not alter the role of the developer and their responsibilities. The developer must provide a planning application which outlines the significance to the proportion of the scheme

(thus any work on a nationally recognised historic monument would need to have a much more in depth assessment than that of an unremarkable archaeological site) (NPPF 2013: 128). Unfortunately, the potential reduction of archaeology in the planning process may be forethcoming in the upcoming Neighbourhood Planning and Infrastructure Bill; its implementation would be a massive regressive step in the protection of England's archaeological sites (Rescue 2016).

Bolstering PPG16 (and now NPPF) and the protection of archaeology was the introduction of the Treasure Act in 1996, essentially borne from the need to clarify the unclear status of what constituted 'treasure', going back to the mid 19th-century (Bland 2008: 64). The act defined treasure as any object containing over 10% precious metal, object found in association with treasure and any coins containing less than 10% precious metal but over 300 years old. The finder and landowner are eligible for reimbursement from the Crown at the current market rate (1996: 10.3). In 1997 the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) was created, funded by the government, with each county employing a Finds Liasion Officer (Flatman 2011: 145). This scheme allowed the public to bring in small artefacts, and encouraged metal detectors and 'nighthawks' (Metal detectorists who detect on private land and archaeological sites illegally) to hand in finds and to act responsible (Bland 2008:70). Without this scheme, Joe Flatman believes that a great deal of material would go largely unrecorded (Flatman 2011: 145), while other scholars have concluded that the treasure Act in general has proved to be beneficial (Renfrew 2000: 83). Colin Renfrew has argued that in recent years the value of small finds such as fint axes has increased and perhaps it is time for the legislation to be amended to include these kinds of finds and not just precious metal (Renfrew 2000: 83).

The fear that PPG16 and the Portable Antiquity Scheme would be ignored or not properly implemented have been unfounded, the past 25 years have seen a vast amount of commercial excavations being performed by a large number of units in front of large scale infrastructure projects; the author would argue (having had extensive experience of work in the commercial archaeology sector) that the problem which has dogged commercial archaeology is the competitive tendering system which was a by-product of commercialisation of heritage. In effect, each company should tender a reasonable amount for the work to be carried out within the time frame necessary; the amount tendered should reflect the need to hire adequate amounts of staff, cabins,

tools and any special equipment which may be needed (for example in deeply stratified sites, shoring may be required). Paul Everill's excellent account of numerous field archaeologists' experiences as 'invisible diggers', support my claims (and personal experiences) of poor conditions within professional archaeology, many of the experiences related are negative, with a feeling of a lack of overall care given to the field archaeologists (Everill 2012). What has occurred over the past 24 years since the implementation of PPG16 is the gradual but significant reduction in the amount being tendered for excavation jobs. Personal experience of the author over the past eight years has shown that often the amount being tendered is not enough to complete the excavation on time or to the standard that should be expected. On many excavations, there is a tight time frame to complete the work, and often not enough time is given to excavate the site (Pers. Obs). This results in archaeological features not recorded properly, and on occasion only planned in situ; indeed, it may be surmised that even though archaeology has been linked to the planning system, standards have not been maintained nor have they improved.

It is obvious that there are several deficiencies with the English planning process but linking the planning system to archaeology has saved thousands of sites and it is a system of protection that could be implemented into Egypt, along with governmental programmes such as the creation of a centralised database of heritage sites and education programme such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme. Without professional companies, who hire skilled archaeologists to perform the vast amount of work, much of the excavation and recording would not be performed to an adequate and professional standard. This issue is developed further in section 2.7, and is of particular concern within the Egyptian heritage sector.

2.4 UNESCO

While England has passed its own legislation pertaining to protecting heritage, a number of international bodies have been formed since the Second World War which have created and supported charters that have been ratified and adopted by the international community, including the UK and Egypt among others. The largest and primary international bodies that are considered are UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) and its advisory bodies ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) and ICCROM (International Centre for

the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property). UNESCO is an agency of the United Nations which protects, educates and promotes the protection of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, in whatever form it takes. In 1972 UNESCO ratified the World Heritage Convention which enshrined each signatory country to protect its natural and cultural heritage; Article 5 in particular, tied each signatory country into producing national legislation to protect its heritage sites. A World Heritage List that only listed the most outstanding universal value was to be maintained by a committee. ICCROM and ICOMOS were separate bodies that were inextricably tied to UNESCO; their ability to attend general assembly meetings enshrined in Article 8.

The creation of a World Heritage List is meant to confer the idea of a protected status upon a heritage site or indeed an intangible heritage entity such as a localised language for example. These sites are visited by delegates from UNESCO and ICOMOS to provide a current assessment of conservation; if they are found to require improvements or conservative work, the governing authority must address these issues and provide updates to how these issues are being addressed. If a country does not take adequate steps to address conservation issues at these sites they can be removed from the WHS list; this has been threatened numerous times (Leask 2000; 7), but rarely enacted. Most recently in 2009 the heritage site of the Dresden Elbe Valley was removed from the list due to the construction of a bridge which bisected the valley (Reuters 2009), so although rare, it has occurred in the recent past and remains a way of imposing a sanction upon non-complying governments.

ICOMOS was created in 1964 as a non-governmental organisation as an association to protect cultural heritage; each country that has signed up to be a part of the organisation has a national committee and implements its own programme of conservation. It is noteworthy that both Egypt and the UK have signed up to ICOMOS and are part of the organisation. ICOMOS have instigated and drafted a slew of charters which were designed to provide guidance and best practices for conservation, repair and consolidation. The first charter to be passed was the Venice Charter in 1964. This charter was the first international piece of guidance that set principles of how conservation of a cultural heritage site or building should be enacted. Its fundamental principles suggested that heritage should not be altered significantly and its traditional setting must be retained (Articles 5 and 6). The removal of later additions to reveal the

earlier periods was not allowed unless in exceptional circumstances (Article 11) and replacement parts had to be distinguishable from the original material (Article 12). The NARA Charter of Authenticity (1994), was a continuation of the Venice Charter (NARA 1994: 46) and attempted to define authenticity within a cultural heritage sphere; Article 11 in particular, defines authenticity as differing between cultures while Article 13 links authenticity to a number of criteria including materials used, documentation, location and setting, tradition and techniques and spirit. Finally, the Principles for the Analysis, Conservation and Structural Restoration of Architectural Heritage Charter (2003) sets out the ideals for restoration and introduced the ideas of minimal intervention (Article 3.5) and reversibility (Article 3.9). These charters are instrumental in providing heritage and conservation specialists with the necessary best practice guidelines, particularly for countries which do not have decent legislation or national guidelines which offer guidelines or legislation pertaining to the protection of heritage.

Alongside these charters pertaining to conservation and restoration, UNESCO have also taken a role in creating the international Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970). This convention signed up each member to take appropriate action against illegal looting and smuggling and provided international cooperation and assistance between each state. Other organisations also contribute to the protection of antiquities; The International Council of Museums (ICOM) produce the Red List which provides current examples with pictures of stolen antiquities from a particular country; an emergency Red List for Egypt was produced in 2011 and listed all the types of antiquities that may be attempted to be stolen and sold on both the international black and open market.

Ultimately, international charters have been drawn up to promote best practices and UNESCO WHS listing provides a way of adding an extra layer of protection and management for the world's most significant heritage sites. A report on behalf of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2007 outlined the benefits of a heritage site being placed upon the WHL; these benefits included increased funding due to the WHL 'brand' from wealthy benefactors and organisations, (DCMS 2007:45-47), and regeneration of the local area (DCMS 2007: 51) and in some cases an increase in tourism (DCMS 2007: 56). Although UNESCO and ICOMOS have positively contributed to protecting world heritage and have provided minimum standards of

conservation that countries can adopt, recently, several scholars have highlighted problems with both of these organisations that are relevant to this study. It may be assumed by many that by gaining entry onto the World Heritage List implies a certain standard of monitoring and management. Egypt, alongside Jordan, Brazil and South Africa have argued that once a site has been inscribed on the WHL, adequate management would follow (Meskell 2011: 147). This view has been challenged by scholars who argue that a World Heritage Listing does not confer an automatic increase in protection and is not always a positive mechanism (Silverman 2011: 16) and often there is inadequate monitoring at sites (Hall 2006: 30). ICOMOS have recently been criticized by non-western state parties for factual errors in its technical reports (Meskell, Liuzza, Bertacchini and Saccone 2015: 424) and have actually been verbally challenged over their reports (Bertacchini, Liuzza and Meskell 2015: 10); this feeds into the growing idea that UNESCO is a Eurocentric organisation with a western bias (Fontein 2000:13). Ultimately this means that more aid, management and protection is given to these European sites over those in Africa, Asia and South America. It has been reported that UNESCO committee representatives in recent years have slowly altered from heritage specialists to politicians and state ambassadors (Meskell, Liuzza, Bertacchini and Saccone 2015: 424); this has implications when UNESCO debate and authorise any specialist missions to heritage sites and has made the whole process much more politicalised with national interests taking centre stage rather than global issues being the primary focus of their remit (Bertacchini, Liuzza and Meskell 2015: 2).

Clearly UNESCO and ICOMOS have a central and important role in providing legislation pertaining to the management, conservation and protection of heritage; as an organization, they have a central role in limiting the illegal antiquities trade and certainly provide an extra layer of protection. There are limits and issues to their remit however; not all heritage sites are managed effectively and it is clear that perhaps the WHL is not an instant fix to any problems at a heritage site and it is an inherently political organization, and in recent years political wrangling has perhaps led to a reduction in heritage specialists taking part in the process and increasingly ICOMOS mission report conclusions being challenged. Ultimately this leads to a devaluing of the ICOMOS reports where its recommendations hold much less weight than they should.

2.5 Conclusion

In conclusion, England has extensive legislation which deals with all aspects of heritage including archaeological remains *in-situ* and standing buildings. *The Ancient Monuments Act* was the beginning of state protection for heritage, and subsequent legislation has offered increasing amounts of legal protection against damage and removal of archaeological remains. The protection of standing monuments and historic buildings has been enshrined in law since 1882, but importantly, archaeological excavation was sorely lacking from the statute books. PPG16 was a start in the right direction in integrating planning and excavation into the development process which came into full fruition with PPS5 which made it a requirement for building clients to pay for adequate archaeological work. England has benefitted from a public body that advises the government, local authorities and the public on heritage matters; they have maintained heritage databases and provided best practice guidance for specialists. Supporting this body have been numerous heritage charities and organisations that have promoted heritage to the public. The extensive legislation of England, the integration of archaeology into the planning system and the ability to maintain detailed historical records of all sites and monuments in England can offer some real insights into how Egypt may follow suit in protecting its own monuments.

It should be made clear that the author is not attempting to propose that the English system should be imposed upon Egypt. Rather, this section has provided important discourse surrounding how English legislation operates and deals with heritage. The legislation discussed in this chapter is meant to highlight the best and worst aspects of English legislation, so that they may highlight deficiencies within the Egyptian system, it is not a proposal that Egypt adopt English legislative practices. The prevailing sections will explore Egyptian heritage in more detail and will attempt to draw parallels and discuss differences with the English system; firstly, the history and development of Egyptian heritage will be explored.

2.6 An historical framework for the development of Egyptian heritage legislation

Before considering the development of Egyptian heritage legislation, it is important to have an awareness of the wider historic context to the development of the governance of the modern Egyptian state, and with it the study of Egypt's past. During the 16th-

century, when Egypt was under the rule of the Ottoman Empire, it was an *Eyalet* (province) of a vast polity which stretched from Syria and Jordan to Romania. Egypt had been conquered by the Ottoman Turks in 1517 ending indigenous Mamluk rule (Armanios 2011: 16). After a century of Ottoman rule, the 17th-century saw the rise of 'Beys', these were high ranking Emirs and Egypt had 24 such functionaries who controlled districts within the country (Winter 1992: 20). These Beys vied for influence over the century which ultimately led to a civil war between the Bey Ifranj Ahmed and the Azab Ottoman infantry (Winter 1992: 23). His defeat and execution in 1711 marked the restoration of the rule of the Ottoman Empire until Ali Bey Al-Kabir deposed the Ottoman Governor in 1768 and assumed the role. His brief rule was tyrannical and marked with assassinations and banishment of those who he perceived as a threat (Winter 1992: 26). He died in 1773 having tried to return Egypt to an antonymous state. After this insurrection, the Ottoman Empire attempted to return direct rule back to Egypt in 1786 but ultimately by this period the Ottoman Empire was in decline and was too weak to defend itself (France 1991: 8); it was during this period of weakness that the French invaded in 1798.

Period	**Date**
Early Dynastic to Roman	3100 BC-30AD
Roman Period	30AD-312AD
Christian-Byzantine Period	312AD-641AD
Rashidun Caliphate	641AD-658AD
Umayyad Caliphate	659-750AD
Abbasid Caliphate	750-969AD
Fatamid Caliphate	969-1171AD
Ayyubid Caliphate	1171-1250AD
Mamluk Caliphate	1250-1517AD
Ottoman Period	1517-1867AD
Egyptian Khedivate	1867-1914AD

Table 2.1. Egyptian historical periodisation

Napoleon's invasion of Egypt in 1798 was the beginning of western colonial influence within the country, although prior to the invasion there were significant amounts of western travellers to Egypt during the 17th-century. The pyramids at Giza

were recorded by a Scottish explorer known only as Melton between 1660-1667, Thomas Shaw in 1720-33 and Anglican priest Richard Pococke in 1737-8 (Wortham 1971: 25-7). All these early explorers recorded the pyramids (in some fashion) at Giza and published their expeditions and travels, but they cannot be classed as performing a scientific exploration of Egyptian monuments, rather they were travellers who published descriptions of their journeys through an exotic land; they cannot be compared with the later Egyptologists who performed much more thorough excavations.

Napoleon's mission was not to only conquer but to also study Egypt, a land which had been seen by Europeans as an exotic curiosity (Jones 2008a: 99). His army consisted of twenty-one mathematicians, three astronomers, seventeen civil engineers, ten draughtsmen and three gunpowder experts (France 1991: 9). During the military campaign, groups of scientists from The Commission of Arts and Science travelled throughout Egypt mapping ruins and studying the natural environment. There should be no doubt, Napoleon's mission was to study everything Egypt had to offer and to take this knowledge back to France a victor. The American archaeologist Kent Weeks explains that before Napoleon's expedition there were very few scholars who studied Egypt and even fewer read Arabic and thus it was a heavily under studied area of scholarship (Weeks 2008: 8). This lack of awareness was to be altered and challenged in the coming century; Egypt's physical heritage was to be taken, plundered and destroyed by waves of foreign antiquarians, and although Napoleon and the French expedition can be considered the first western group to protect antiquities in Egypt; the construction of the *Institut d'Égypte* in 1798 was the first step towards the plundering of some of its most important Pharaonic treasures.

The French expedition was short lived; Napoleon departed back to France in 1800 defeated, but he essentially opened the doors to western scholars, consuls, antiquarians and frankly anyone who wished to purchase Egyptian antiquities for their own gain and on behalf of foreign museums. The French expedition, with hindsight, has been qualified as a military disaster, but a triumph for French culture (Greener 1966: 1). The publication of the *Description de l'Égypte* between 1809-1829 revealed hitherto unknown knowledge on Egyptology and the various scientific discoveries during the expedition to Europeans (Greener 1966: 1). The interest in the 'exotic' Orient was not solely limited to western Europe, in Russia there was also a large interest among the

nobility during the first half of the 19th-century. This can be seen in the purchase of large amounts of artefacts in 1824 and the acquisition of two sphinxes dating to Amenhotep III (found in a mortuary temple of Kom-el-Hettan, Thebes) and their transport to St Petersburg, Russia, in 1832 (Koroleva 2004: 1039).

Although the French had departed Egypt, they left (along with the British) behind a consul to keep relations open with Egypt. This ambassador was Bernardino Drovetti who from 1803-1815 was involved in acquiring antiquities for the French state; he was highly successful during this period and owing to his friendship with Muhammed Ali, the ruler of Egypt, controlled the antiquities trade along the Nile valley (France 1991: 31). The British Ambassador Colonel Ernest Misset was unable to compete with Drovetti and in 1815 was replaced with Henry Salt; his replacement was far more ambitious and proved more than a match for Drovetti. This was a period of intrigue and subterfuge with different agents working for both British and French interests and the privileges extended to both Salt and Drovetti by Mohammed Ali roused a rivalry so intense that 'zones of interest' across Egypt were drawn up between the two men (Greener 1966: 120). John Wortham described the period between 1800-1850 as the time when the professional Egyptologist began (Wortham 1971: 60); although Drovetti and Salt may be called Egyptologists, their methods were far removed from what we may call archaeologists, this was not to occur until the 1850's with the work of Alexander Rhind and the later methodical excavations of Flinders Petrie.

One of these agents hired by Henry Salt was the Italian 'strongman' Giovanni Belzoni; he was employed to recover artefacts to be displayed at the British Museum, while Drovetti, similarly employed Coptic agents to recover artefacts for their return to France (Tokeley 2006: 2). Belzoni and Salt were extremely prolific in restricting French activities (France 1991: 61); Belzoni roamed the Nile in search of artefacts and paid no attention to preservation or conservation (Fagin 1973: 50), recovering many large Pharaonic artefacts including the large head of Memnon during this period. His methods have been described as 'crude', which may be an understatement, but he made many important historical discoveries (Wortham 1971: 62). The struggle between the two colonial powers saw many rare artefacts destroyed, it was reported that Drovetti's agents smashed the temple reliefs at Philae so Belzoni could not acquire them (Tokeley 2006: 25); Belzoni was not much better, smashing open tomb doors

using battering rams to gain quick access to the treasures inside (Fagin 1973: 50). Henry Salt's death in 1827 mattered very little to the wholesale destruction of Egyptian heritage, unfortunately protection was the last thing on the colonial visitor's minds (Weeks 2008: 7) and the 1830's saw many archaeological sites looted under the guise of excavation. Excavation during this period was tantamount to ripping open the doors to tombs and using dynamite to get to the valuable artefacts; for example, Henry Vyse drilled holes into the Sphinx to see if it was hollow (Weeks 2008: 9). This was not an isolated incident and he is reported to have damaged all of the pyramids in one way or another (Wortham 1971: 73-4). The early 20th-century was a hugely damaging period towards Egyptian heritage; both historical sites and many artefacts were plundered, destroyed or re-appropriated to a foreign museum. The status quo was to alter in the coming decades with the arrival of scholar Auguste Mariette in 1850.

When Auguste Mariette arrived in Egypt, no one would know how much of an important legacy he would leave on Egyptian archaeology and the way it is managed. He was ostensibly sent from Paris to purchase several Coptic manuscripts, instead he spent the money afforded to him excavating at Saqqara, eventually unearthing the Pharaonic religious temple, the Serapeum (Weeks 2008: 10). By 1858 he was undoubtedly the most famous archaeologist in Egypt having performed many excavations across Abydos and Thebes; for his dedication to unearthing Egyptian antiquities, the *Khedive* (Viceroy) Ismail Ali Pasha conferred on him the role of Conservator of Egyptian Monuments in 1858, marking the start of the Egyptian Antiquities Service. This role was the first of its kind and marks the very beginning of heritage management in Egypt and is a precursor to the Supreme Council for Antiquities/Ministry of State for Antiquities. His first act was to create the Museum of Cairo (Weeks 2008: 11). He was supported by Ismail Ali Pasha in these early years of forming an Egyptian Antiquities Service by providing labourers for excavation and giving him the warehouses that would go on to become the Museum of Cairo (Greener 1966: 183). He used his influence as close friend of Ismail Ali Pasha and head of the Egyptian Antiquities Service to stop many other European Egyptologists excavating in Egypt except the French (Wortham 1971: 83); this resulted in a heavy French domination of Egyptology during this period.

His successor in this role after his death in 1881 was Gaston Maspero, who focused upon the cataloguing and publishing of the antiquities stored in the museum in

the *Catalogue Générale* and founded the journal, *Annals du Service des Antiquités de l'Égypte* (Weeks 2008: 11). While the Egyptian Antiquities Service was in its infancy, *Khedive* Tawfiq Pasha concerned over the state of preservation over Islamic art and architecture formed the *comité* in 1881*,* it consisted of a mixture of Egyptian and western connoisseurs or Oriental art. However, by 1890 westerners dominated the board (Reid 2002: 226). The *Comité* focused almost entirely on preserving mosques and mausolea (Reid 2002: 228)[8], perhaps displaying their penchant for 'Oriental' antiquities suited to contempotary exotic tastes.

Despite the *Comité* focusing their preservation efforts upon the Islamic and Coptic heritage sites, the late 19th-century saw a move towards a more methodical approach towards archaeology; archaeologist Flinders Petrie adopted the idea of recording and planning every single layer of archaeology and kept all finds for further study no matter how insignificant it appeared. His methods were not adopted by his contemporaries but he had a lasting effect upon his students who adopted his methods. Petrie taught Egyptology at University College London when he returned to England and in 1912 began a training course to teach students the practical aspect of methodical archaeological excavation; in addition, he was progressive in that he also taught female students and let many of them participate in excavations such as Annie Pirie who would later marry the English Egyptologist James Quibell (Janssen 1992: 13). The move towards more methodical excavation practice would not have been possible without the diligent work and funding of Amelia Edwards. She was an important benefactor who formed the Egypt Exploration Fund in 1882, it was borne from a commitment to preserve antiquities and to rescue them from institutions such as the British Museum (France 1991: 156-9). Her interest was piqued during a trip along the Nile river in 1873-4 where she was appalled by the neglect and vandalism of the many tombs and monuments (Janssen 1992: 1). She created the Egypt Exploration Fund to combat this needless destruction and arranged with Gaston Maspero to have sites reopened to non-French archaeologists (Wortham 1971: 109).

[8] Interest in the 'exotic' Orient in western European culture is documented in Edward Said's *Orientalism* 1978. It documents the taste for the perceived 'exotic and romantic Middle and Far East, including Egypt and the Holy Land. It is therefore unsurprising that many members who made up the Comite in the 19th-century were western Europeans who wished to acquire treasures from far flung lands to display back home in museums or private collections.

Control and oversight of Egyptian heritage sites continued into the first half of the 20th century by the Egyptian Antiquities Service until 1971 when it was renamed the Egyptian Antiquities Organisation. During this period, they oversaw excavations and large scale mapping projects such as George Daressy's Delta surveys in 1912 (Parcak 2008: 60). This continued until 1994 when it was renamed the Supreme Council of Antiquities (SCA) until most recently in 2011 the organisation became an independent ministry, becoming the Ministry of State for Antiquities (MOA) (Sca-egypt.org ND). The Ministry of State for Antiquities is comparable in scope to Historic England in that both are organisations which look after and control its own heritage, but Historic England is a QUANGO, therefore it is an organisation which is directly funded by the government but is not actually a government ministry, although it is directly responsible to the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The MOA is a government ministry and therefore acts slightly differently in that it is directly controlled by the government rather than a public body solely funded by the government.

The revolution of 2011 altered the political scene within Egypt, President Hosni Mubarak, incumbent since October 1981 was forced to step down in February 2011 following mass demonstrations; part of the media dubbed 'Arab Spring'. An interim government was formed by the army and subsequent democratic elections in June 2012 led to the Muslim Brotherhood and its new president Mohammed Morsi gaining power. Growing dissatisfaction over the running of the country by the Brotherhood led to a further uprising only a year later in June 2013, this led to a coup by the Army and imprisonment of many Brotherhood supporters and members of the party. Democratic elections were held in June 2014 with General Abdel el-Sisi winning the presidency, and being sworn in.

During this period of upheaval and uncertainty, the Ministry of State for Antiquities faced an unsettled period of change. Zawi Hawass (perhaps the most famous modern Egyptian archaeologist) has held the post of head of the Supreme Council of Antiquities (later renamed the Ministry of State for Antiquities in 2011) since 2002. Zawi Hawass has been a controversial figure within Egyptian archaeology during his tenure as head of the SCA; he has been denounced for being too self-promoting rather than looking after Egypt's heritage (his own fashion line came out in 2011) (USA Today 2011a). He resigned in March 2011 citing his reason as to put pressure upon the

government to do more to protect heritage sites from looting during the turmoil (USA Today 2011b). His resignation was short lived and he was reinstated to his position in early April (Press TV 2011) but by late July he was ousted from office which some media commentators believe was to do with his previous relationship with Hosni Mubarak (The Guardian Online 2011b). His replacement was Mohamed Abdel Fattah who has held the post until March 2016, when he was replaced with Khaled El-Enany (Al Ahram 2016).

2.7 Current issues in Egyptian heritage policy development

Now that the historical background to how heritage has been studied and protected since the early 19th-century has been explored, the current state of heritage in Egypt must be examined to determine how the important issues will affect Coptic heritage sites. Currently, heritage sites across Egypt are under threat from a number of serious problems. There are four fundamental issues at present to consider, the first is the lack of full integration of heritage management, archaeology and building recording into the planning and construction process; the second is the use of non-specialists to perform conservation work, the third are social constructs with a real lack of awareness of heritage and education amongst the general public, and the fourth is the lack of a central database of heritage sites. Combined, these issues place Egypt's diverse heritage at peril (Hassan 2009: 2). As discussed previously in section 2.3, England has involved archaeology in the construction process since 1990 and since 2010 construction companies must pay for any archaeological work prior to developing any land for construction. Egypt, in comparison, has yet to fully integrate the excavation of archaeology and the recording of historic buildings before any building work occurs. At this juncture, it is important to consider what legislation Egypt has passed to protect its vast patrimony.

The legislation a country has codified into law reflects how much it values its own heritage; it follows that a country which does not have adequate laws to protect its patrimony can create problems for specialists when attempting to protect heritage. Egypt has a large amount of laws designed to protect its vast array of historic sites; this is of course a reflection of the country's rich Pharaonic heritage. The current laws were created in 1983, codified in Law 117 and updated in 2010. The laws of 1983 were designed specifically to deal with archaeological remains found *in-situ* rather than

standing buildings. The pertinent articles relating to the protection of Egyptian heritage are:

-Article 20 states that no third party may excavate or build on an area which has found to have archaeological remains (Law No 117 of 1983: Article 20)

-Article 18 states land may be seized temporarily in order archaeological works to be carried out. If the owner must vacate his land, he shall be fairly compensated (Law No 117 of 1983: Article 18). In addition, there are several deterrents and penalties relating to damage of heritage properties; these are punishable by varying degrees of severity:

-Article 42 states anyone who excavates an archaeological site or destroys any part of it can be sent to prison for between 5-7 years and may also be fined between LE£3000-£50,000 (Between $480-$7181 US Dollars or £262-£4371 British Sterling in 2016 rates of exchange) (Law No 117 of 1983: Article 42).

-Article 43: Any theft of antiquities will result in a 1-2 year prison term or a LE500 pound fine (£39 or $56) (Law No 117 of 1983: Article 43).

It is pertinent that all of these laws relate to protection of archaeological sites and the theft or looting of small portable objects, this is perhaps a response to the great deal of looting undertaken during the 19th-century by the colonial powers. It was not until 2006 that legislation pertaining to historic buildings was passed; law 144 and specifically Article 2 prohibited the issuing of demolition notices for buildings of architectural value, with penalty clauses in Article 12 of up to 5 years in prison and a fine of up to LE5 million pounds (£394,936 or $563,318) (Law No 144 of 2006: Articles 2 and 12). Unfortunately, although these laws have been passed, there are some notable weaknesses inherent within them that have been exploited by developers and building owners. Firstly, the largest problem that should be discussed is the lack of sub-legislation linking archaeological investigation and recording of buildings to any proposed construction or demolition work.

The absence of integration into the construction process is a problem previously discussed by numerous authors (eg. Abada 2008; Williams 2001-2) and one which has still not been rectified. The problem of integration has recently been

highlighted by Coptologist Michael Jones (2008a: 110) who stated that contractors at heritage sites show reluctance to include sufficient levels of involvement of archaeologists in the early preliminary stages to allow for mitigation. There are clear parallels to the situation faced with English archaeologists in the pre-1990 period where archaeological sites would be removed without any type of consultation with heritage specialists. There are numerous examples of infrastructure projects past and present, where there has been no desk based assessment or forethought before digging and demolition began; Michael Jones again cites the example of many monumental buildings of Bubastis in Lower Egypt being destroyed during building work (2008a: 101) ahead of construction of new hospitals and army barracks (Habachi 1976: 273). Recently, many of the 19th-century villas such as the Villa Casdagli have been demolished (Cairo Observer 2013), in direct opposition to law 144. It appears that only when construction work will definitely find archaeological remains, the Ministry of State for Antiquities steps in and authorises an excavation; for example, during sewage works in the village of Nezlet-al-Samman in Cairo, the contractors came upon the Valley Temple of Khufu at Giza, this was to be expected and Zawi Hawass reports that it was subsequently excavated (2005: 7). Clearly there needs to be more inclusion of archaeological consultation during the planning stage and although legislation exists, the enforcement of it needs to be stronger to force developers and building owners ignoring specialist's advice.

While a lack of fit for purpose policy is to blame for many of the problems facing heritage, compounding this problem is bureaucracy and a lack of clarity over responsibility between the different government departments responsible for maintaining and authorising conservation at heritage sites and buildings. The departments that are responsible for the upkeep and conservation of buildings and potential building sites are many and include the National Organization for Urban Harmony (NOUH), the General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP) (which was part of the Ministry of Housing), the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry for *Awaqf*, and the Ministry of Antiquities; this is obviously a great deal of departments to deal with the issue of heritage protection. Caroline Williams has previously critiqued this issue, concluding that one of the biggest problems in heritage management is the lack of communication and liaison between the departments (2001-2: 594). She is not the only scholar to consider this a problem, she is supported by Amanda Kiely (2008: 204) and Saleh Lamei (2009: 125) who all conclude that this division of control and lack of

co-ordination between the departments results in a very slow moving process that can hinder the conservation process. These ministries are supposed to co-ordinate their efforts to deal with these issues, but in many cases, do not (Sedky 2005: 11) and the resulting overlap means that work is often hindered (Abada 2008: 94).

To highlight this dilemma, Caroline Williams uses the example of the MOA being unable to evict homeless squatters from historic buildings to commence work on restoration (2001-2: 595), but it can be equally applied to other scenarios such as the removal of piles of dirty rubbish before any excavation can begin. It has been suggested that the problem is exacerbated by a lack of formal mechanism for co-ordination (Jones 2008a: 107), so logically the problems could be eased by a number of different solutions; by creating more legislation to link the conservation process with those of the other ministries, to allow the Ministry of State for Antiquities a way of flagging issues with other ministries so they can tackle the problem in a timely fashion or to create much more clear divisions of influence between the ministries. It is clear that the problem lies with a lack of sub-legislation that offers a formal way for the independent ministries to discuss with one another the issues that they face and for them to work together. The fact that the MOA does not have sole power over planning applications and the ability to remove illegal construction from a heritage site ultimately means that they cannot act quickly when something threatens heritage sites. Religious buildings, however, are treated and managed slightly differently to other types of heritage site, and are governed by the Ministry of *Awaqf*.

The Ministry of *Awaqf* governs the Islamic and Coptic monuments in Egypt, and own up to 95% of the Islamic monuments in Cairo (Williams 2002b: 467). Historically, the Copts have had their land confiscated from them; in the 1950's, President Gamal Abdel Nasser confiscated Coptic lands, which were partly returned by President Anwar Sadat in the 1960's (Zeidan 1999: 57-58), but it was not until 1998, that Copts recovered significant amounts of land and therefore control and ownership back from the Ministry of *Awqaf* in 1998 (Al-Ahram 1998), the net result being that the Copts have control over how their churches and monasteries are managed and restored and are an active participant in the Permanent Committee for Islamic and Coptic Monuments (the new name for the *Comité* after 1952). It is also pertinent to note that the Copts must fund any repairs or conservation to their property (Law 117 2010: Article 30). The problem, however is that although they own heritage sites, the Copts

are still responsible for co-ordinating and authorising any repairs or conservation efforts with the MOA, unlike the English example where control has been devolved to the independent religious denominations. Obviously, they may have different ideas on how this conservation works should proceed and as discussed earlier, the departments do not always discuss with one another on how to proceed.

So, this lack of adequate heritage legislation, in particular, dealing with historic buildings coupled with the lack of coherence and overlapping responsibility of the departments which have a stake in urban planning and conservation lead to ineffective laws and policies (Kielty 2008: 210). Although, the Copts own their own heritage sites and historic churches and monasteries, they must still co-operate with the other government departments; this can have a distinctly negative affect upon any conservation efforts, for example, the conservation of a historic church in Cairo may not be able to commence until illegal shanty constructions are removed from outside the church, this requires the Department of Housing to be involved as well as the MOA and this can tangle up the process and delay work. Unfortunately, these problems are not the only ones facing Coptic heritage sites, exacerbating these problems is a real lack of competence in restoration and repair coupled with unscrupulous companies profiting from improper conservation techniques.

At present, any excavation of an archaeological site or conservation of a historic building is supervised by the Ministry of State for Antiquities; the situation within Egypt is vastly different to England, there are no archaeological companies which deal with excavation or the recording of buildings, and it is left to non-governmental entities such as the American Research Centre in Egypt (ARCE), the University of Cairo and various foreign universities to excavate archaeological remains or to survey and record standing buildings. For example, a joint run ARCE and University of Chicago project has been conserving and documenting the Temple of Medinet Habu at Luxor (ARCE 1997), whilst other foreign university excavations such as those at the monastery of Shenute at Sohag conducted by Darlene Brooks-Hedstrom and the University of Wittenburg, USA were in collaboration with the SCA (the former name for the Ministry of Antiquities) (Grossmann and Brooks-Hedstrom et al 2004). Therefore, there are no commercial or what we may class as 'professional' archaeologists or standing building recorders as is the case in England; this is not to say a team may be led by a professional archaeologist and may employ a number of

qualified archaeologists but ultimately there are no privately owned companies who employ full time specialists, so often it falls to either a construction company or it relies on using charities or universities to complete the project. The result is that there are many construction projects currently being undertaken and very limited archaeological teams that can be used before demolition commences, resulting often in unqualified and understaffed teams performing conservation work on historical buildings; this is a latent problem that potentially affects all conservation work at Coptic heritage sites.

Although the Ministry for Antiquities authorises and supervises any excavation and conservative work, there have recently been several poorly-executed conservation projects upon historic buildings in Cairo. The problem has been exacerbated by the lack of governing standards for both archaeological excavation (Tassie 2004: 1771) and restoration. In England, Historic England provides a great deal of guidance to conservation and heritage specialists as discussed earlier in section 2.1, the MOA by comparison does not issue any guidance to these companies, instead they must rely on International UNESCO best practice charters to guide them, as discussed in section 2.4. The result of a lack of official guidance has led to a number of poor restoration jobs such as the Bohra sect's restoration of the Al Hakim mosque, where completely new architectural elements were added and a Mamluk facade removed (Williams 2002b).[9] Perhaps one of the most high profile conservation projects which was widely condemned is that of the mosque of Al Azhar (dedicated in AD 972AD); in 1999 the conservation programme led to the sand blasting and removal of all the fine detail of the original stucco work façade and the installation of new marble panels which were out of keeping with the original style (Williams 2002b; Sedky 2005). Unfortunately, these are not isolated incidents and have begun to affect Coptic monuments. Recently, the Bishop of the Coptic Church of Al Mu'allaqa in Cairo has taken legal steps against the Ministry of State for Antiquities after the church was damaged during its restoration in 2000 (Williams 2002: 461).

So it is clear that although the work has been approved by the Ministry, this is not an automatic hallmark of quality; the actual companies performing the task are not always qualified to be conserving historic monuments and in some cases there have

[9] The Bohra sect are a sub-group of Muslims who converted from Hinduism to Islam in India. The term translates as 'merchant' or 'trader' as this was the trade of the original converts. The Bohra sect has small enclave communities across the world, most notably in Egypt and East Africa (Amiji 1975: 1).

been reports of contractors performing unnecessary procedures to claim more money for the job. Caroline Williams' study of improper conservation techniques being used highlighted a number of substantial problems. She noted that the companies who performed the restorations of these mosques were in fact construction companies, not qualified conservation companies. In the case of the Al Azhar mosque, the 'Arab Contractors' performed the work, it was at this site that consolidant chemicals were injected into the bricks when they did not require any maintenance at all and were structurally sound (2002: 462). This confirms Ahmed Sedky's conclusion that these companies real motive is not retaining authenticity at these sites but financial gain (Sedky 2005: 9), and that too often there remains an attitude of what Lisa Giddy calls the three Cs: clearance, cleaning and claiming its archaeology (1999: 109). The problem with using construction companies to perform restoration of historic monuments clearly results in renovation rather than conservation. Authenticity is often sacrificed in the pursuit of a modern aesthetic. To temper this unchecked renovation of buildings, long-term goals -a process supported by ex-head of Ministry for Antiquities Zawi Hawass- (1995: 11) must include the training of conservators who can be employed on these jobs and preclude the use of construction companies who do not specialise in conservation. This obviously has large implications for any conservation work performed at Coptic heritage sites and buildings, any work must be conducted to a high standard and follow international laws. The situation is slowly improving however, with new training initiatives being setup across Egypt.

There are a few initiatives throughout Egypt which aim to improve the ability for normal Egyptians to become qualified in protecting Egyptian historic buildings and excavate archaeological sites. The Nadim Project at the Mashrabiya Institute takes school drop-outs and trains them to become qualified conservators, although there is currently no programme which offers explicit training in the conservation of Egyptian objects (Gansicke 2008: 165). During the late 1990's and early 2000's a number of scholars perceived the need for more training of local archaeological students Lisa Giddy (1999: 109) wrote about the worrying lack of archaeological training coming into field archaeology and the impact this has on their ability to judge whether excavations or indeed conservative efforts have been performed correctly, while Christian Leblanc wrote that foreign missions needed to collaborate more closely with local Egyptians and exchange knowledge (Leblanc 2003: 65). Concurrently, foreign institutions now train Egyptian students on research excavations, although this is a relatively recent

development (Weeks 2003a: 44). Clearly there is not enough local initiatives to teach CHM, excavation and conservation and it is not widely taught enough in Egypt at the moment to allow sufficient Egyptians to be employed in the conservation of sites. Fekri Hassan has been a proponent of trying to garner recognition of CRM within the Arab world for many years now (2008: 13); but as Nigel Hetherington forcefully states, heritage management is slow to permeate into Egyptology (2009: 149); it is slowly gaining recognition via a number of initiatives, yet still many archaeologists approach the work without an explicit CRM approach (Holmes 1992: 69).

It has been noted in previous papers that outreach programmes would foster respect and raise more local awareness of heritage (Fushiya and de Trafford 2009: 47); the restoration of the temple of Horus at Edfu has raised the possibility of creating a workshop where locals can come and become involved in the process (Jiminez-Serrano and Cardell-Fernandez 2009: 180). One of the signal training schemes for local Egyptian students in partnership with foreign university projects is the Kafr Hassan Dawood Project, a Protodynastic to Early Dynastic cemetery site in the eastern Delta region sponsored by UNESCO. Part of the project was to act as a field school for young Egyptian archaeologists and to train Ministry of Archaeology inspectors (Tassie 2004: 1776). This is not the only field school, the American Research Centre in Egypt also run training schemes too (Tassie 2004: 1776). So, clearly there is a need to 'Arabize' training as Zawi Hawass has noted and to not rely on foreign expeditions (Hawass 2000: 60). The MOA also needs to follow Kent Weeks assertion that training programmes should be developed for heritage managers, so they can look after their own heritage sites (Weeks 2003b:71) and restrict the poor conservation jobs which have marred so many Islamic and Coptic monuments.

Therefore, owing to the lack of local Egyptian knowledge and specialism, it is often left up to foreign specialists to perform conservation work (such as seen at ARCE's work at the monastery of St Antony; Bolman 2002). To give an idea of the scope of foreign expeditions in Egypt, during the early 2000's there were more than 20 foreign and Egyptian expeditions working in Luxor alone (Hawass 2000: 50). Many conservation projects and archaeological excavation are performed by foreign institutions, and there is notably more rigorous enforcement of standards, although it has been remarked in the past that foreign intervention is not always welcome (in regards to the New Alexandria Project, for instance; Butler 2001; 65). The ARCE annual

report for 1996-1997 states that they were refused excavation permits (ARCE 1997); it can be interpreted that there is some resistance within the Ministry of State for Antiquities to allow foreign missions to be allowed to excavate within Egypt. New rules also dictated that any excavation must use a credited specialist in their field (ie; only an Egyptologist can excavate a Pharaonic site). In addition, the SCA banned excavation in Upper and Middle Egypt in 2003 for ten years to focus excavation on the Delta region which is under threat from rising water tables (Weeks 2003a: 44) and many sites are in dire need of conservation with not enough time or money to rescue them all. To combat this the MOA has written into all foreign agency contracts that a proportion of the money set aside for the project should be spent on conservation of the site (Hetherington 2009: 150), something proposed in response to Zawi Hawass' presentation of 'Site Management and Conservation' at the Eighth International Congress of Egyptologists in Cairo, 2000 (Mayer 2003: 69). Compounding this issue of a lack of training and Egyptian born heritage conservators is a general disinterest and lack of fundamental education about their own heritage within the Egyptian local community.

2.8 Theft and encroachment of sites by the local population

The discussion has focused upon heritage policy and how specialists approach the conservation and excavation of sites and monuments, yet many issues arise from a lack of education and awareness of heritage amongst the local population, what Historic England would term 'stakeholders'; this is combined with an all too often poor quality of life where many are struggling to feed their families and keep a roof over their head. A poll in 2004 concluded that less than 5% of native Egyptians visited the Cairo museum (MacDonald and Shaw 2004: 113). These statistics are entirely believable given the other examples of how locals care for their heritage sites. Jonathan Tokeley uses personal experience to assert that locals do not visit heritage sites (Tokeley 2006: 181), his view is upheld by other scholars who note that there is a distinct lack of cultural awareness within the Egyptian community (Dumbaru, Burke and Petzet 2000: 211) and is a particular problem in Historic Cairo, where locals do not recognise the significance of historic buildings (Lamei 2009: 124). Dalia Elsorady supports these claims by stating that many historic building owners do not even understand the concept of 'heritage' (Elsorady 2011: 511). Recently, many archaeological sites have been used as rubbish dumps; Robert Holmes used the example of archaeological sites

in the Badari region in Middle Egypt (Holmes 1992: 77), but more recently the site of Matariya (Cairo Observer 2014) has been used by locals as a rubbish dump. Even the Giza plateau has waste deposited onto it by local Egyptians (Evans 1998: 190). In conjunction with illegal agricultural practices threatening many Tel sites as reported by Geoffrey Tassie (2004: 1770), these practices are putting many archaeological sites in danger from extinction.

The housing issue is an important one and has had a detrimental effect upon many historic monuments; many have been left to deteriorate through a lack of interest. Cairo is home to many shanty towns and slums; these are often constructed atop historic sites. Zawi Hawas noted that this was a particular problem and that as the law was weak, squatters could not be evicted (2000: 51). The tombs of the Caliphs (dating from 1382-1517AD) outside of Cairo's city walls are mostly inhabited by the poor (Dumbaru, Burke and Petzet 2000: 95) and the area of historic Cairo is densely packed with the poorer members of society (Ibrahim 2001: 189). The population explosion in Egypt and its effects upon heritage sites is a problem recorded far back as 1976 (Habachi 1976: 273). This problem has only worsened over time and has been cited in previous studies (Williams 2002b; Attia 1999); both authors indicate that this is a serious problem which is damaging historic buildings, but it is something not being challenged owing to housing being at a premium and the lack of enforcement by the authorities.

One of the biggest problems is the lack of affordable housing which means many are homeless and set up home in any place they can; it has been reported that the local population have moved into any space available (Evans 1998: 180). Encroachment of heritage sites is commonplace and is one of the most significant dangers to archaeological sites; the ancient ruins of the Pharaonic city of Crocodopolis in the Fayum were razed to the ground with only an acre preserved for study (Habachi 1976: 273) for example. Obviously, the problem is that either locals do not know the site is of archaeological importance or they do not care. Dallen Timothy and Stephen Boyd believe that a society chooses what heritage to inherit (2003: 4), unfortunately it seems that many Egyptians do not care about inheriting any past culture, except perhaps portable antiquities which may be stolen and sold on the black market in exchange for money.

The trade in stolen antiquities indicates that many locals are aware of the archaeological and historical importance of a site but are driven by either necessity or greed. There are two types of looting, locals who are opportunistic, and the more organised gangs who illegally enter archaeological sites. An example of the latter is at Kom el-Hettan. On March 19th 2011 Statuettes including a life-sized head of Amenhotep III dating from the 18th dynasty (1388-1351BC) were stolen by an armed gang of locals; in this instance they were caught promptly but many other sites have been plundered with no chance of capturing those responsible (Echo 2013b). Sarah Parcak has used aerial photography to study the state of looting within Egypt and has noted a 1000% rise since the revolution (Al Jazeera 2014); she cites the Pharaonic burial site of Abu Sir al-Malaq as a primary example of the scale of looting with only 30% of the tombs still containing all of their artefacts. These figures have been contested by Zawi Hawass who is quoted as saying the statistics regarding looting are not accurate (Antiquity Now 2014), but there has been a significant rise since the army and police forces can no longer patrol heritage sites. Indeed, this lack of monitoring which has been considered a problem in past publications (Jones 2008a: 116) has led to the repeated attempts of antiquities being sold on not only the black market but also via the Ebay website, and through legitimate sources such as auction houses (eg. Christie's). In May 2013, Christie's auction house removed six Egyptian antiquities from sale, the seller was arrested and successfully prosecuted for fraud (The Art Newspaper 2013; Al-Ahram 2013a). While the majority of antiquities stolen appear to be pharaonic in age, this is a problem which also affects Christian heritage; looters attempted to break into the Coptic Museum in Cairo in early 2011, luckily, they did not gain entry (BBC 2011), but it displays that all ancient artefacts -including Coptic- are at risk from thieves.

The Egyptian government is trying to tackle this problem by stopping the sale via legal means. In 2014 the minister for the Ministry of State for Antiquities, Mohamed Ibrahim, asked President Obama to stop the flow of Egyptian antiquities into the US by increasing searches at the border (NY Times 2014). At the same time, they clamped down on sales through Ebay and Christies by asking them to force all sellers to provide provenance and if this is not possible to remove it from sale (ASOR 2014). Although this is a step in the right direction it does not stop the problem of looting at the sites which really needs more policing and more forceful deterrents such as an increase in prison time or fines. This is a problem of course with wider global

implications, and does not just affect Egypt alone.

2.9 National database of heritage sites

Part of the long-term goals for protecting Egyptian heritage as a whole, and Coptic heritage specifically should be to develop a system of accurate, well maintained and easily searchable database of all sites across Egypt, and more specifically well maintained records of individual sites. The previous sections have dealt with the idea of improving heritage policy, and the creation and maintenance of a national database would be a step in the right direction. It cannot be stated strongly enough that without meticulous record keeping, it is pointless in recording historic buildings and archaeological sites; we may as well remove archaeological remains with a machine if detailed records are not kept. It has been noted previously that databases are essential to conservation policies (Streeten 1994: 148) and Egypt does not have a national database which reduces the Ministry of Antiquities ability to control and document changes at its sites effectively. Without these records, as Henry Cleere feared back in 1984, important sites may be lost owing to a paucity of data (Cleere 1984: 126). Unfortunately, his fear has come to be realised, not in England but in Egypt. The uses of a database would predominantly be used to create conservation assessments and Desk Based Assessments for any site or building which needs conserving or excavating. In England, Historic England has scheduled over c 20,000 sites and monuments and has recorded over 1 million archaeological sites (Historic England 2013: 13).

The earliest list of records was begun by the *Comité*, who drew up a list of 450 monuments in Cairo (Sutton and Fahmi 2002: 81) that were to be protected in the 19th-century, and this was updated in 1950 by The Egyptian Antiquities Service to encompass 622 sites (Schreur 1999: 18); in addition, there are a few limited sites in historic Cairo and more widely at Luxor (Abada 2008: 89). It was not until Law 144 of 2006 which gave legal protection to historic buildings that allowed a list of protected buildings to be upkept by the governorate, yet Ahmed Sedky's summation notes that there is no effective classification system (such as grades I, II and II* in England) to document buildings (2005: 6). Egypt does have a limited database of sites although it is clearly in need of updating; in 2000 the Egyptian Antiquities Information Sense was created to record historic buildings using GIS mapping and photography (Jones 2008a: 102), while ARCE recently completed a project to map all the monuments in the Islamic

district (Warner 2010). The amount of sites in Egypt is currently unknown, -although Kent Weeks estimates there are over 5000- (Weeks 2003b: 71), but a conservative estimate would put it at least around the number England has if not more, but without a concerted effort, an official number shall never be garnered.

While there are limited projects and databases of historic sites as discussed, currently there is no centralised national Egyptian databases of monuments (Abada 2008: 95) and no comprehensive plans for all antiquities within Egypt, although there are a few topographical maps for a limited few sites (Hawass 2000: 50); there are a number of independently funded projects which aim to rectify the need for a detailed database of sites such as the documentation of all monuments in the Islamic Quarter by ARCE in 2010 (Warner 2010). Geoffrey Tassie has reiterated the need for uniformly, standardised recording on excavations (2004: 1775) and his assertion is correct if Egypt is to form a database of Egyptian heritage sites. The Theban Mapping Project is one such endeavour, Kent Weeks heads a small team which try to record systematically the thousands of tombs and temples in the City of Thebes (Weeks 1996: 843). More importantly to the study of Christian archaeology is the work undertaken by Howard Middleton-Jones and the Coptic Database; the aim of this project is to record all monastic and parochial sites in Egypt (Ambilacuk.com 2007).

The clear message from these examples is that it has been left to non-government organisations to create lists of sites within their respective fields; yet Egypt does need an amalgamated database of all sites, regardless of type and age. Whilst the existence of any digital heritage databases is a boon to Egyptian archaeology as a whole, Egypt really needs a central, governmental database which can be accessed, searched and added to, allowing archaeologists easy and quick access, and enabling them to complete desk based assessments quickly (often the heritage sites are in danger or desperate need of preservation) and accurately. There is no point in having a database if it is not accurate and misses valuable sites nearby to the building or site. Indeed, Kent Weeks makes the salient point that any database must be regular and systematic in its recording (Weeks 1996: 843); much like England's HER; without this it is useless.

In addition to limiting the ability of archaeologists to create an accurate assessment of a monument or site, the other great danger is the lack of ability to

maintain a check on individual sites. Previous academic work has deduced that a database of sites similar to the HER is needed to define conservation policies (Streeten 1994: 148); the lack of a national register in Egypt means the ability to assess and monitor a site, or crucially damaged components such as walls, roofs and floors becomes almost impossible. Damage cannot be tracked over a set period (every two years for example), nor a time frame for remedial work to be implemented. Without a national register, we are limited to how each one can be tabulated and what differentiates them from one another. The law in its current form cannot be used as a way of attributing significance or keeping track of substantial damages at Coptic sites, although future developments of the Coptic site database may one day allow archaeologists to keep track of sites and their status.

2.10 Conclusion

It is hoped that this chapter has provided some much-needed context and discourse of the current state of Egyptian heritage, and in particular the problems that face Christian sites across Egypt. By using the English system as a comparative model, the deficiencies and strengths of the Egyptian sphere become apparent. It is clear that there are sufficient failings in both its legislature, education and in its social treatment of antiquities. Focusing on the legislative issues, Egypt's laws, while offering some protections, do not go far enough and have sufficiently exploitable loopholes which allow developers and building owners to deface, destroy and circumnavigate the law in many instances. It is worth reiterating at this juncture that blindly adopting the English model would be inappropriate. It has been used as a comparative model, partly due to the author's personal experience, but also as it demonstrates a great deal of heritage protection legislation that really emphasises the lack of provision within Egypt. Although it would be inappropriate to propose an English style system upon Egypt, elements of English protection could be used as a basis for constructing Egypt's own heritage protection laws; for example, by tying any construction work that will impact a historic building or will remove an archaeologically significant area of land to the planning and development process.

Threat	English legislation	Egyptian legislation
Planning	NPPF (2013)	None
Portable antiquities control	Treasure Act and Portable Antiquities Scheme (1996-7)	Reliance on international legislation
Destruction or alteration of historic buildings	The Planning Act (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990	Law 144 (2006)
Excavation of archaeological site	NPPF (2013)	Law 117 (1983)
Issue of permits to excavate properly	HE Scheduled Monument Consent	MOA granted
Religious building planning	Ecclesiastical Exemption	Waqf Law

Table 2.2: Mapping threat assessments and mitigation policies in English and Egyptian contexts

England's PPG16, replaced with NPPF in 2013, has succinctly tied archaeology into the planning process with any proposal requiring an archaeological assessment and where appropriate, an evaluation or building survey, with the majority of power and decision making devolved from centralised government to the local planning authority. Currently, any development where there is an unknown archaeological element is not under protection of Egyptian law, only pre-discovered sites are protected. Ultimately this means that heritage sites such as Coptic churches will be under some form of protection, yet those which are unknown or form a distinct era within a multiphase site that is yet to be discovered are woefully under protected. This problem is exacerbated by a real lack of clarity over each departments role when managing a historic property leading to inaction for years in some cases which results in the loss of fabric and degradation. Legislation is needed to really define each department's role when dealing with archaeological remains and historic buildings with perhaps overriding control given to the Department of Antiquities or a mechanism for quick resolutions to specific problems such as illegal housing construction over a site.

While a lack of sub-legislation and overlapping duties between departments is

an issue, perhaps equally damaging are social issues in Egypt. Local Egyptians in general do not understand their own heritage, or in some cases do not care about it. Looting at archaeological sites is relatively common and increased during the period of unrest between 2011 and 2014, with the Coptic Museum lucky to remain unscathed. Clearly there is an issue with education, and local involvement would go a long way in treating this issue; currently foreign missions and NGO's are responsible for the majority of archaeological excavations and many of the conservation projects, including those that involve Coptic monuments. Those Egyptian companies that perform conservation projects have not been viewed in a particularly positive light, with improper restoration being reported at many sites. The lack of education needs to be addressed, with the ministry of Antiquities taking a leading role in disseminating conservation guidelines rather than relying on UNESCO charters, and hoping building companies adhere to them. England has a great deal of local organisations such as the National Trust and CBA where interested locals can visit and join in excavations and more of these are needed across Egypt. There is a step forward with the Kafr Dawood project but the government need to really be central in creating some forward momentum in this area. England's Portable Antiquites Scheme has been very popular and educational, perhaps these types of schemes would help raise awareness among local Egyptians and in turn help protect heritage from looting and encroachment.

Whilst heritage protection needs to be tackled at a wider state level, local heritage remains an important aspect for the Copts in developing a tangible, realistic heritage protection strategy. The key problem which surrounds this issue is the lack of a centralised member or group within the clergy who deals with conservation issues at all Coptic heritage sites, is cognisant with heritage legislation and best practice and can liaise with the Ministry of Antiquities. This lack of awareness from the clergy filters down to the local Copts, who, in many cases are unaware of the issues facing the heritage surrounding them. It would certainly be prudent to suggest a brief outline of what the bare minimum is needed to begin to tackle this issue of educating the local Copts. Firstly, education for clergy at each site is needed. By teaching members of the church about the issues heritage sites face such as abrasion, they can actively monitor the sites they inhabit and stop members of the laity from causing any damage. The second implementation that must occur, is the need for local heritage 'workshops' to be created that local Copts can attend. These would ideally teach locals the benefits of protecting heritage, being mindful about litter and abrasion and current academic

considerations within conservation such as the need to retain authenticity. The third and final act would be the creation of pamphlets to support these aims, with a wider aim to tailor these to individual sites and the issues they face. These are the minimum enactments needed to begin a grassroots initiative that will support the education of the local Copts.

Lastly, the need for a national, searchable database of historic sites and listed buildings is integral to any future conservation plans. Without this maintaining change across building and sites, and providing accurate desk based assessments is largely impossible. Small initiatives such as the recent mapping of historic buildings in Islamic Cairo is both worthwhile and needed, but a much larger in scope project is required to allow heritage specialists to develop management plans that take into account significance of the local area and to develop national a register of listed buildings nationally as was created in the 1990 Listed Buildings act in England. The appropriation of significance to a heritage asset is a hugely important part of a conservation plan and therefore more discourse is required on this topic; chapter three shall debate this issue in much more detail.

English heritage policy	**Egyptian Heritage policy**	**Global heritage policy**	**What does it do?**
Ancient monuments act 1882	Auguste Mariette became Conservator of Egyptian Monuments (1858)	N/A	Created role of Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Conservator of Egyptian Monuments respectively.
Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1913	N/A	N/A	Provided a legal framework to provide grants to local authorities

			and National Trust to protect heritage sites
Town and Planning Act 1932/1947/1971	N/A	N/A	Centralised Planning and gave the ability to confer preservation notices upon historic buildings
The Planning Act (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) 1990	Law 144 (2006)	N/A	Created 'Listed buildings' and a grading system in England. Law 144 prevented illegal demolishment of historic buildings.
PPG16 (1990)	Law 117 (1983/2010)	N/A	Linked archaeological fieldwork and building recording into the planning system in England. Law 117 prevents illegal excavation without a permit and gives strong penalties for antiquities theft

Treasure Act 1996	Law 117 (1983/2010)	Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property (1970)	Legislation pertaining to the theft and illegal sale of antiquities
PPS5 (2010)/NPPF (2013)	No legislation	N/A	Forced Developers to pay for archaeological works ahead of development
Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008), *Principles of Selection guides* (2008), *Scheduled Monuments Policy Statement* (2013) and the *Principles of Selection for Listing* (2010)	Reliance on International Legislation	Venice Charter (1964) and NARA Charter of Authenticity (1994)	Provides best practice guidance for the conservation and repair of historic monuments and buildings

Table 2.3: Intercomparison of aims of Egyptian, English and International heritage policies.

Chapter 3 - The theoretical context: significance, value and meanings

3.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter framed the development of Egyptian cultural heritage policy in the light of the English experiences; it has shown that there are real deficiencies with its heritage laws which may protect Christian buildings, and there is a lack of legislation which forces set parameters onto which historic Christian buildings must be recorded. Often it is left to the various agencies such as the American Research Centre in Egypt or foreign university projects to create a heritage management plan for the sites under investigation. One of the most important issues in the assessment of any heritage site, be it in England or Egypt, is the determination of 'significance' of the heritage entity and how we can quantify this paradigm; this determination forms the core of this present chapter, and here we begin to explore some of the theory which underpins policy.

The concept of significance itself is not an easily discernible paradigm, it can mean different things to different groups or individuals; therefore, an independent assessment is carried out by archaeologists, curators or heritage specialist to try to determine what is particularly valuable about a site,[10] whether it is in monetary terms, significance to the local area or even on a national scale. As discussed in the previous chapter, Egypt is woefully under equipped to deal with its extensive historical patrimony and Egypt's present antiquities legislation offers no advice on how to designate or quantify significance or value. Therefore, other sources must be consulted to gain a wider perspective of what significance actually means within the remit of heritage and how it may be applied when creating an assessment. To that end, an examination of guidance used in England and how it designates significance is a

[10] Examples of assessments are myriad in England but for a succinct example, one may examine the management plans for two English UNESCO World Heritage Sites Hadrian's Wall and Stonehenge (English Heritage 2008a; English Heritage 2008b). Both assessments examine what can be considered the qualities which make it significant at both the local, national and international level.

prudent place to start, to try and gain perspective of this amorphous issue.

3.2 Assessing significance: the experience from English heritage practice

The previous chapter outlined that England has extensive and comprehensive legislation in place to protect its national and local heritage; Egypt on the other hand does not have any national guidance available for heritage specialists, therefore an examination of the English guidance is a good place to start when trying to quantify significance and value. The pieces of guidance that are used by other heritage organisations to develop their own in-house criteria for assessing value and significance, and by Historic England when deciding to grant scheduled monument status are the *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* (2008), *Principles of Selection* guides (2008), *Scheduled Monuments Policy Statement* (2013a) and the *Principles of Selection for Listing* (2010). Combined, these supply the current theoretical framework in assessing significance and designating value to heritage sites and buildings in England. The *Scheduled Monuments Policy* in particular is designed to allow an independent assessment of a heritage entity, which is provided to the Secretary of State for a decision whether to confer scheduled monument status; in other words, it is designed to filter the best examples of heritage from the more mundane and provide an extra layer of protection for them against future development. The *Scheduled Monuments Policy Statement* criteria are designed as a guide to provide a written report detailing what feature (or features) makes it deserving of scheduled monument status. The criteria in the *Scheduled Monuments Policy Statement* used by assessors are:

-Archaeological/Historical Interest: (is there any interest in performing excavations in the future and does it provide a link to past events and people)

-Period (how representative is this monument of its period in history and how long was it in use?)

-Survival and condition (how well the monument or site has survived, and what is its state of completeness?)

-Rarity (how rare is this type of monument, regionally and nationally?)

-Vulnerability (is the monument at risk from external factors such as damage from its environment?)

-Diversity (how many components there are to the site? The more components then the better the score for ‘diversity')

-Documentation (how well documented is the monument in both the historic record, such as medieval writings but also any previous archaeological work?)

-Group Value (the monument may be more valuable as part of a larger group rather than as an individual monument?)

-Potential (is there any archaeological potential and can we learn more from the monument or site?)

The guidance states that these are not the only criteria to consider, but should be used as indicators to determine a broader judgement (Historic England 2008: 11). So, although the assessor relies on a checklist, these are used to help provide a more complex and in-depth discussion of what elevates a specific monument above others and to provide a balanced assessment of the site or monument. While this document is used internally by Historic England, other guidance is used by Historic England to determine significance and value when writing a heritage management plan. Historic England and other professional heritage and archaeological companies use heritage management plans to assess historic buildings and monuments. Currently the guidance from the *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* are the most comprehensive instructions to be used by themselves and various other English heritage companies and consultancies to assess the significance, value and condition of individual sites, varying from the nationally important, such as Stonehenge, to large natural resources such as the Lake District.

Heritage management and conservation plans are written by companies employed by contractors before they want to build upon an area of land and are designed as a long-term solution to dealing with problems, both potential and latent. Sensibly, the guidance offered by the CPPG, while providing criteria that should be

investigated, also allows the assessor to discuss each criterion fully in a similar way to the *Scheduled Monuments Policy*. Comparatively, the *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* has been designed, in its own words, to ensure a consistency of approach in carrying out the role as the government's statutory advisor (2008: 13). Effectively, they want all heritage specialists to follow these guidelines when assessing historic sites and do not want any kind of deviation from this, lest there be any erroneous designations, or accusations of irregular designation or listing of heritage sites. Their conservation principles set out the criteria that evaluators should consider when assigning both value and significance. The questions posed to assessors when assigning significance are:

-Who values the place and why they do so?

- How those values relate to the fabric?

-Their relative importance.

-Whether associated objects contribute to them and contribution by the setting.

-What is the context of the place and how the site compares to others that are similar (2008: 21).

The policy suggests that the criteria to assess value should be:

-Evidential Value (2008: 28): the ability to derive historical information about the place or period'.

-Historical Value (2008: 28-9): how people connect to a place. This can be an associative link to a historical figure or event and tends to be illustrative, this means that a site or building will display evidence of culture or history such as a pattern of brickwork unique to an area of locality and includes how rare a site may be.

-Aesthetic Value (2008: 30-1): the pleasure derived from viewing a monument or building. It notes that this maybe designed on purpose, or may be caused over years of alterations and additions.

-Communal Value (2008: 31-2); the value placed upon a building, site or area by a group of people. Some people may draw part of their identity from it or it may have a spiritual or symbolic value. All of these criteria should be used in conjunction with one another to form a written plan that records all of the salient data from a site or building and presents what elements that it possesses that can be considered to be of value and significant to England at a national level.

If we examine these criteria in more detail it becomes clear that both the *Scheduled Monuments Guidance* and the *Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance* are very similar; there is clear overlap in what they ask assessors to consider when designating significance and value and some criteria such as rarity are acknowledged in both sets of guidance as an important factor to be considered. The CPPG differs from the *Scheduled Monuments Guidance* in a few areas however; emphasis is put upon how the entity fits into society, and whether there are any other associated connections to the site such as finds or perhaps an association with a famous historical figure. Value is derived from a link to members in society as a whole or from a sub-group (such as a religious minority); members may garner some form of identity from it, for example a church that has served members of a local religious congregation for hundreds of years will hold value to those members and they may associate their brand of religion with that particular church. This type of value obviously holds great importance when providing assessment at Christian heritage sites in Egypt, where the local community have strong ties to their churches and monasteries, and where they hold a sense of religious identity. Communal value therefore suggests that living heritage sites and those with a religious or spiritual link will potentially be deemed more valuable than those that do not.

Great emphasis is put upon how much more information can be gleaned from a heritage entity; evidential (or archaeological) and historical value/interest are present in both guidance documents. Obviously, the level of information that can be recovered either through architectural/archaeological investigation and its ability to be linked through historical documentation must be taken into account and clearly there is a link between how much a monument can still tell us about the past and how valuable it is. The site of a historically recorded great battle will be thought of as more significant and valued than a simple prehistoric settlement in this category for example. It also asks for

the aesthetic value to be discussed, a visually attractive building or a type of architecture from an era in history would be evaluated and those that provide more intellectual stimulation would be viewed as containing more value to society; particular areas of reconstruction or additions such as Baroque architecture covering Tudor could be considered to have a rarity or particular significance to society. Obviously, these criteria are not designed to be viewed in isolation, and the person assigning value must take all of these criteria into account and often these determinations will affect its future; potentially if it is decided not to be of high enough value the site or building may be destroyed to make way for a new building or infrastructure project.

Of course, criticisms could be levelled at this method of assessment (eg; Schofield 2000), who negatively calls assessments with an inherent scoring and comparison component 'monument discrimination' (Schofield 2000: 80). A heritage specialist invariably has enormous power when it comes to designating significance of a heritage asset, perhaps Andrew Selkirk's example of 1930's bicycle sheds in the UK proves this point. The question posed by him is: Should we knock them down due to ugliness? (Selkirk 1997: 8). The general consensus is that these buildings are aesthetically unsightly by today's standards, -an eyesore on the landscape-, however, they are quite rare and this criterion should be taken into account when designating them; crucially this goes against general public consensus. It is an intriguing argument, something disliked by the general public, yet owing to its rarity and potential value in the future it is deemed to be worth preserving for future generations. It showcases the power a specialist has, and highlights that although local opinion must be taken into account, the broader context and what may occur in the future must be examined also. By designating 1930' bike sheds as significant the specialist has elevated them above other similar types of modern building, intentionally or not. In this instance rarity was the overriding factor in determining significance and helps prove there is a definite correlation between whether something is significant and its rarity. This is perhaps a very western normative view that if it is rare, then it must be more valuable (in this case to society).

The notion of rarity and unique qualities should be probed further; it has been shown to be an integral part of Historic England criteria but perhaps the guidance for designating a grade I listed building demonstrates this link between significance and rarity and uniqueness; the guidance notes that a rare and unique building is more likely

to contain ‘special interest’ (Historic England 2010: 5). It is not only Historic England suggesting this link, other scholars have pointed out that this is an important factor in assigning significance and value with many including it in their own list of factors to consider (Aplin 2002: 20; Pearson and Sullivan 1995: 127). The previously highlighted case study of 1930’s bike sheds being assessed as a significant heritage asset is an excellent example of this direct correlation between the rarity of a historic monument and its significance; generally, the outstanding examples of heritage are the rarest and most unique. Stonehenge is considered perhaps the UK's rarest and greatest heritage monument because there are no other examples like it in the world, this reason alone elevates it above all other monuments or sites in the UK and gives it parity with other unique monuments across the world (for example the Pyramids in Egypt). The lack of other examples of a particular type of monument means that it may be the only record we have of a long-lost culture, it is this belief which leads scholars such as Gregory Ashworth and John Tunbridge to conclude we conserve the remarkable (and often rare) before the mundane (Ashworth and Tunbridge 1994: 24).

The fear of losing the only historic record of a dead culture is a powerful one and leads scholars such as Michael Pearson and Sharon Sullivan suggest that prehistoric rock art is regarded by scholars as more important to humanity than the example of an axe grinding groove (1995: 127); the rock art is considered rarer and more aesthetically spectacular. It is a popular theory reiterated by John Bold who laments over the poorer (and much more abundant) examples of a site not being recorded as there are ‘better ones’ available (1994: 81), the emphasis being that they are not worthy of being recorded as they are not rare or unique. It is true that many sites or buildings once recorded are destroyed by building development projects, and the only reason they are destroyed is that once we have recorded all the information from them we can they are no longer useful when there are other examples preserved elsewhere. Clearly there is a correlation between the belief that if a site is rare then it is significant; the loss of history, culture and knowledge is unthinkable to all heritage scholars, historic Christian sites in Egypt are rare compared to those which date to the Islamic and particularly Pharaonic periods. If we are to follow the argument that rarity automatically confers significance upon heritage, then Coptic churches, monasteries and archaeological ruins must all be classed as holding significance and therefore should be preserved at all cost. The diametric opposition to this viewpoint is that we should conserve all heritage sites as they all offer a significance to humanity.

We as heritage specialists must record what is significant about both the buried heritage and the historic standing buildings. The previous example from Andrew Selkirk offers a curious comparison with Egypt. Heritage specialists, the Ministry of State for Antiquities, and local Christians would view historic Coptic sites as both a rare record of a living historical culture and as a local church or monastery in which the local laity go to pray. The majority Muslim population would not view it as significant, however, so the question posed should be: Do we still consider it significant and should it be protected from harm? The answer is of course yes, even though the majority of the population in Egypt hold these Christian sites to not be significant or care about their survival. Standing historic Christian buildings in Egypt are rare, for example there are only a handful of historic churches in Cairo, therefore each one has historical merit and offers a significant example of medieval Coptic architecture and history. If we are to judge significance on rarity alone, they would be classed as significant, yet they are judged on more criteria than this alone, such as what knowledge we can gain from these sites and how their loss would negatively impact upon the local living Copts nearby. This is one of the strengths of using Historic England's criteria in assessing significance; it allows a balanced and full account of a site's significance to be discussed. Not all scholars believe that heritage specialists should be selecting certain heritage sites to be preserved at the expense of others, however.

There is a contrasting opinion that rather than selecting the outstanding sites to conserve we as heritage specialists should be striving to protect all heritage sites and monuments, because they are all significant. Nicholas Stanley-Price is one such proponent who contends all sites should be preserved forever, as they are all significant in some way (Stanley-Price 1995: 3). Unfortunately, this viewpoint is unworkable in practice; it would result in 100% of sites saved (a noble but unrealistic view) and no new building work would be allowed to continue. The problem lies in that not all sites have a uniqueness to them, for example a Bronze age site in Britain may have the same shaped ditches and pits as countless others, once it has been fully recorded, planned and photographed, often these sites cannot be displayed to the public and offer no further ability to be studied having been fully excavated. So, do we keep all of them and hold up future development of the land? The answer is no; it is unrealistic to adhere to the notion of everything must be preserved, particularly those sites which are not rare or unique and have offered as much data and evidence as possible. This is not to say that destruction of heritage sites should occur wantonly -the

threshold must be set high-, but the argument that all heritage sites must be preserved because they are historic is a fallacy.

The current English model of creating heritage and conservation plans overall works sufficiently well, where the state believes each heritage site can be assessed and a determination of its value and significance can be sought through an independent assessment; there are thousands of archaeological sites, monuments and buildings and a way has to be sought to differentiate the more mundane and pedestrian sites, which while adding to our collective knowledge of heritage do not contain any further value to society nor do they have any uniqueness or aesthetic value for the future. In this respect the system works very well at categorising and scheduling monuments and listing buildings. Importantly, not all scholars advocate this categorising and selecting monuments for safeguarding over others, but in lieu of preserving all heritage sites which is unworkable, it is the most fit for purpose type of assessment that can be used by specialists.

Comparing the significance and value of each Coptic monument or archaeological site against one another is a futile exercise in Egypt; currently the ability to compare the individual merits of each Christian historic site in Egypt is non-existent, there is no database or HER of all heritage sites in Egypt of which to construct a like-for-like comparison against each other to determine what is significant or unique or indeed rare, and no easy way to compare the subtle differences between the same types of site easily and effectively without serious time consuming research. Therefore, individual heritage management plans must be created for each Coptic heritage site which outline the case for its continued preservation and displays each site's unique qualities and value to society. The criteria Historic England have provided are excellent foundations to build Coptic heritage management plans and force the assessor to ask a multitude of different questions as to how the site holds value and is significant; saliently it does not rely on one aspect, rather its value to society, its aesthetic beauty, and rarity are assessed together to provide a comprehensive plan that lists each aspects of its significance and who values the site; this is the model that this thesis will attempt to adhere to. Having discussed the types of criteria that should be used in a Coptic heritage management plan, section 3.3 will provide the discourse of who may assign significance and whether heritage should be assigned significance by the local population or by the wider heritage community.

3.3 Global vs Local Heritage

There are two idioms of thought regarding the interpretation of heritage and in particular who can decide what is particularly significant at a heritage site or monument. Interpretation of heritage can thus be divided into two spheres, firstly, global recognition and worldwide interpretation; this clearly means anyone can form an opinion over a site, monument or even a form of intangible heritage. Any viewpoint is valid: a very post-modern concept perhaps. In opposition to this view is local ownership, which offers a narrower interpretation of a site, that of the local community who own the site or monument or have lived on the land for hundreds of years, and that viewpoint alone. The site is viewed through a very narrow prism, but this is not to say other interpretations cannot be made by outsiders, but what is regarded as significant by the local population is given more focus.

The juxtaposition between the two theories -that heritage and its interpretation- belong either to the world or to a local population has coined the term universalism versus localism (Lydon 2009: 30). The basic theory of universalism which frames this debate is that heritage belongs to everyone in the world, not only the local community. One of the highest profile supporters is Vittorio Veronese, previously director of UNESCO, who is quoted as saying the past is for everyone to enjoy and not only the owners or local population (UNESCO 1970: 40), this is echoed by Sue Millar's view that 'theoretically' all people in the world are stakeholders of heritage (2006: 38). They are not alone in this thinking; Nick Merriman argues that cultural resource management (CRM) is public as it relies on public support (2004: 3). Other scholars such as David Lowenthal (2005: 85) have taken a more moderate stance by stating that legacies of nature and culture belong to local people and all earth and its inhabitants, as has John Carman who explains, heritage can be both global and local at the same time (2002: 11). This stance has been criticised by Darrin Lee Long who argues the phenomenon of heritage is purely global (2000: 317). Clearly there are scholars who believe that heritage should belong to all inhabitants of earth and should not be solely interpreted by local inhabitants or a minority group and we all have a stake in heritage whether or not we come from that particular country or region. In an Egyptian context, the argument would be- should only the local Copts be able to enjoy and interpret their own heritage, or can any other visitor be able to interpret their culture and history?

It has been argued that significance should not be solely determined by the local minority group who have an emotional or cultural attachment to a monument or site; it is clear that heritage is inextricably intertwined with identity (Baxter 2012: 1); the value of a site can vary dependent on who you are and your relationship with the monument, the local population will have different views to the visitors (Jamieson 2000: 37). It is obvious that if you are living at a cultural site you will view it differently to a first-time visitor or as someone who has only seen it in magazines or on TV. As Michael Stratton and Graham Taylor put it - ''it must be accepted objects can be entirely looked at in different ways by professionals and different groups of public'' (1994: 57). The visitor to a site has been credited as deciding what should be classed as significant by certain scholars in the past; the pervading theory of it being 'in the eye of the beholder' has been suggested by Tony King, who noted the way visitors feel about a site or place is just as important as the beliefs of the owners or the local inhabitants (King 2005: 40). This is a widely-held view by many other scholars such as Michael Pearson and Sharon Sullivan who believe the visitor reaction to a monument or site is what is important, the significance being chosen by their reaction to it (Pearson and Sullivan 1995: 127).

To put it into context, a spring which furnishes a monastery with water, will be significant to a Western atheist tourist as it allows the monks to survive in the desert; it means nothing more to them than that. To a western Christian it may be surmised that Coptic heritage is essentially ancient Christian heritage and thus religiously significant to all Christian across the world. To the monks of the monastery it is the spring which sustained the life of a saint and takes on a whole new, far more powerful meaning, and to the local Copts it is a vehicle for cultural survival and self-identification within a predominantly Muslim society. Clearly there is scope for many different interpretations of a heritage site. So, when assessing Coptic heritage sites, we must not only listen to the local population but also what visitors hold to be significant at the site and listen to a whole range of opinions. Management and conservations plans therefore have to be inclusive, and reference the non-specialist as well. This is all part of the post-modern democratisation of heritage, and breaks the straightjacket of viewing Coptic heritage in particular as some form of quaint oriental throwback. The emphasis clearly is on reflecting dynamic diversity. This is an important issue to consider.

It has been noted that although visitors can choose what is significant about a

site, perhaps they are not best suited to judge, and that it should be left to academics and professionals to choose significance. Peter Fowler's question summarises the dilemma by posing the question- should archaeology only be academic or what the public want (Fowler 2006: 1)? And what if the locals do not believe in the same criteria as those compiled by the professionals (Emerick 2001: 281)? There are a number of thorny issues with allowing visitors to decide significance; Andrew Hall reminds us that monuments and sites often have a hidden significance or value that we as visitors do not understand or are even aware of (Hall 2009: 30). Graeme Aplin raises the important point that most visitors do not have the skills or knowledge to interpret a heritage place or artefact (2002: 30); they must rely on heritage professionals to provide this information, so in a sense we can control what outsiders hold significant to a site. It could be concluded then, that visitors lack the key deductive skills to make an informed decision over what is significant at heritage sites. By choosing to allow visitors and academic scholars to have an input we may also be challenging a community's local traditions, its myths and its cultural history.

Larry Zimmerman asks if we actually need to challenge a community's myths and local traditions, and proposes a concession: to use a version of the truth that is open to interpretation, not an absolute truth (2008: 76); this need for an absolute truth has been noted as a very modern western construct (Lowenthal 1985: 235), and so local minority groups may not understand the need for a single interpretation. So, there is a dichotomy between the local inhabitants choosing significance and the visitor having an input also. Do we just listen to the views of Coptic Christians alone, or to Egyptians as a whole, heritage professionals or indeed the wider global Christian community who view the Coptic Christians of Egypt as some archaic original Christian group whose heritage has to be managed at all costs within a (perceived) threatening environment? The author suggests that a detailed assessment of significance should take in all views of what should be considered significant but should pay particular importance to the views of the local Copts and the church itself. It is not up to us as scholars to push a specific version of history upon another culture or to determine what should be classed as significant, rather we should be documenting what others hold significant about the site, the historical fact and a range of opinions and beliefs whether it be from the local Copts or visitors to a site, but the interpretation by the local Christians should be given paramount importance over those of the visitors.

Supporters of a 'global heritage' discourse use examples of a monumental and critically acclaimed work to support the argument that anyone may interpret and assign significance; to this end Graeme Aplin uses the example of cave paintings at Lascaux, south-western France as an example of global heritage (2002: 9), he notes that these cave paintings belong to all of humanity and not only to France. The cave paintings at Lascaux can be uniquely identifiable as world heritage because they were created by humans who although geographically linked to that area of France, were not identifiably French in the modern sense; there are no indigenous people who can lay claim to have created these works of art, ergo they automatically become 'world' heritage. This is not the case with cultural heritage produced by a minority or indigenous group, where the debate over whether it should be identified with solely that group or ascend to a loftier position of global recognition. Picasso's paintings and Mozart's symphonies have been used by supporters of global interpretation as signal examples to show that a local piece of work can transcend its humble beginnings and become globally recognised (Kamal and Hale 2009: 92). Here the authors try to support the claim that even though these individuals have created a work of art so amazing and critically acclaimed, that it has transcended the locality it was created in and becomes more than a single national heritage, it now becomes the world's heritage for all to critique. So there is a clear divide between classing heritage as global when it was created by a dead culture and re-appropriating a living cultures heritage as global, something Jane Lydon termed the Universalism vs localism paradox (Lydon 2009: 30). Not all scholars follow the belief that cultural heritage should be open to interpretation by outsiders, however; these scholars follow the idea of a localised heritage, where the minority group has full control over how their history, artefacts and sites are interpreted.

Contrasting with the idea of a global heritage where western archaeologists and tourists have a say in what is significant about a site, is local heritage. An important part of the management of a heritage site is the ownership rights of indigenous populations (which in this case are the Coptic Christians of Egypt) and more importantly the control over their own culture and what they might deem significant; it becomes particularly important when members of a religious group are living (and indeed worshipping) at these sites. Minority groups may hold more commonplace sites as highly significant to their culture, indeed significance has more to do with how a person or group perceives something. This theory is emphasised by Michael Pearson

and Sharon Sullivan, who suggest significance is a human artefact which is fluid, compact and dynamic (1995: 21). It has been surmised by John Carman (2009: 48) that the object is not important but what we hold important about it, this stance was elaborated further by Ian Handler who used his own personal experiences from the death of his mother to explain his theory that objects do not have an inherent meaning, it comes from meaningful human activity, for example, if he took away his parental memories from an object owned by his mother, it quickly loses its power (Handler 2003: 354). It is this emotional attachment and cultural affinity which causes a heritage monument to become significant. If a culture does not feel any affinity with a particular ethnic or minority heritage, then they may not hold any significance towards them.

To use a topical example to explain this perspective, the Bamiyan Buddhas in Afghanistan were partially destroyed when the Taliban re-seized power in the late 1990's. Derek Gillman and UNESCO see these statues as part of common global heritage, the Taliban obviously did not have any cultural affinity to these monuments (2010: 12) and destroyed them. They had no emotional or historical attachments to these statues, and viewed them as Islamic fundamentalists with disdain even though western countries and UNESCO had deemed them to be part of a collective world heritage community. UNESCO in its role as spokesperson for the world had made an interpretation of it and deemed it worthy of conservation, yet the local community--, albeit one that did not create the artwork-- has deemed it unworthy. Of course, the Bamiyan Buddhas evidence the presence of a long-disappeared Buddhist community which has been absent from Afghanistan for over a thousand years, so arguably they do lack a day-to-day significance for the people who live there today. It just so happens that the people who live there today happen to have a specific cultural aversion to the depiction of deities. Their destruction shows that a cultural attachment is often needed to find heritage significant and that when a culture has no cultural connection to works of heritage they can hold them to have no significance whatsoever. In previous studies Jenny Wallis and Robert Blain (2007: 27) found that an emotional attachment was a constituent in determining ethnic identification.

So, there is clear evidence that significance can be designated as coming from an emotional or cultural attachment to heritage, and it is something which must be considered when forming an assessment of Coptic heritage sites. The Copts, as an

ethnic minority group in Egypt, may consider the archaeological remains of an early Coptic church wall more significant to them than the Pharaonic pyramids, which the rest of the world hold to be highly significant to humanities history owing to an emotional attachment gained from a cultural affinity with previous long dead ancestors. But, do the local groups have the sole right to determine what is significant at a site? Clearly, they have the right to interpret their own heritage as they see fit, as noted earlier, it should not be our role to impose a set of beliefs upon a minority culture, or indeed any other culture that it not our own. The Coptic Christians of Egypt consider the historic buildings and archaeological remains as remnants of their culture and we should as heritage scholars should respect this view. This does not mean that we cannot interpret their culture separately or view it in a different manner and attach significance to an item that they may not, but saliently it does mean that as the owners of their particular culture they have the right to have an overriding say in what should be considered significant.

3.4 Conclusion

This section has touched upon a number of key issues in regards to the thorny problem of significance of heritage sites. This chapter has presented the debates within the wider global context to provide some depth to the issues facing the Coptic Church. The different ways of assessing significance have been addressed and it has been concluded that a robust system of assessment should be used; again, the English model can provide some previous examples which would work well in an Egyptian setting. A management plan as used by Historic England and other commercial companies allows for an in-depth focus on the individual components of a site or building, and the ability to really explore what the problems of the site are and why they are considered significant to the site, the local Copts, visitors and in some cases the world. It allows ideas to be developed, such as the local intangible heritage of the Copts, visitor experiences, and what they consider to be significant at the site, and allows perspective to be gained through the overall process.

Much dialogue has focused upon growing appreciation of local input into the conservation, management and interpretation of heritage sites, although as we have seen this dialogue ought not to alienate or isolate the more global perspective. It should be made abundantly clear that the Copts and local Christians are the primary

stakeholders of their own built heritage and culture and we as outsiders do not have the right to impose our beliefs upon them. It has been noted that the negative point to this is the ability of the assessor to clearly judge the significance of a site, yet we may still use criteria which is deemed to be critical to conferring significance upon a site such as rarity. It is important to gain a wide range of views, not only those of the Copts, but of visitors and specialists also, but crucially the views of the Copts should be presented as the primary beliefs of the site. Any other interpretations may be offered still but as owners and primary stakeholders in their own heritage they should be allowed to express their opinions first, lest we return to the ethos of the 1970's where minority group's views were disregarded.

What we do not wish to return to is the issue that the 'west knows best'. Heritage professionals are not always the best people placed to appreciate, recognise and enhance inherent values of a site. It is a complex balancing act, and in the case of the study presented here needs to balance the daily needs and wishes of a Christian community which perceives its existence to be under threat as well as wider concerns. This balancing act does force us to consider the viewpoints of outsiders to an extent and we should not summarily dismiss their ideas, although we should be focusing on what the local population considers to be important and significant primarily. For example, the assessment of Haret Zuwaila, Cairo in chapter 6 should listen to both local concerns and those of visitors, but it should consider the concerns of locals as paramount. The idea of collaborating with the Coptic clergy at each heritage site is important, without their help and input it may be interpreted that we as westerners are reinterpreting their history or deciding what should be considered significant. The Copts should be treated with the same respect and collaborative efforts as any other indigenous minority.

Chapter 4- The practice of conservation and management

4.1 Introduction

Once an assessment of overall significance of a site (which as we have seen can exist on many levels) has been completed, the next step is to define what the particular conservative issues of a site are and to determine if there are any constraints which may ultimately determine what actions are taken (Baker and Shepherd 2006: 107). This also has implications for the interpretation and presentation of the site within the wider management plan. The use of conservation and preservation work on heritage sites and individual monuments has been well documented in previous studies (for example Stanley-Price 2009; Ashurst 1990 and 2000) and it is a well accepted part of the heritage management process, being utilised across the globe at many high-profile monuments, including many UNESCO world heritage sites. The churches and monasteries of Egypt are in need of conservation and repair; therefore the discourse of the subject should relate to the different methods available are and how they would impact Coptic heritage sites. Any alteration to the historic fabric of a building will have long lasting impacts to the authenticity of the building and may cause the permanent loss of historical relevancy in the wider context of both Coptic and Egyptian history. Any future action plan must weigh up each case individually to determine which conservation acts are appropriate, but there are a number of tenets which the conservation community agree on, and a number which are disputed. This chapter aims to discuss and clarify these discussions so the effects of any conservation work proposed in the author's case studies (whether it be renovation, repair or consolidation, these terms will be defined below), will be clearly understood.

The processes involved in the protection of a site inherently determine the extent of change or modification it endures, and ultimately how it is perceived by both the local inhabitants (in this case local Christians) and visitors. Furthermore, without a strictly defined terminology we find ourselves in a dangerous position of misapplying a remedy to a problem which ultimately may not be the correct solution; to quote Herb

Stovel: ''the effects of conservation depends on our ability to clearly define heritage values and design a treatment around these'' (Stovel 2005: 2). Therefore, a discussion is required to define the terms used in this chapter and when they should be applied; there is no universal agreement between conservators to determine what treatments are appropriate, but there is enough significant discourse on the subject to warrant an interpretation of what the terminology means; this will provide us with enough information to determine what is the correct course of remedial action when assessing Coptic heritage sites.

The two most commonly associated words with heritage protection are conservation and preservation; both are similar in their remit- to prevent further damage being enacted upon a heritage asset-, the way they provide this is slightly different, however. It should be clarified that the terms conservation and preservation in the US are synonyms, the processes of conservation and preservation are indistinguishable. In Europe, these terms hold different meanings (Ashworth 1997: 94), with the definition of the word conservation meaning a process which hinders deterioration (Myrin 2006: 9) (salient examples would include the introduction of reinforced steel bars into the wall foundations as seen at the Serapeum, Luxor; (Luxor Times 2012), whereas the goal of preservation is to arrest change in material (Drury 2006: 36). Examples of this type of action would include the injection of consolidant chemicals into historic masonry to maintain its current appearance forever, as utilised at Angkor Wat, Cambodia (Ciochon and James 1994: 42).

The phrasing of conservation indicates the term would subsume any action upon a heritage asset including restoration, renovation and repair, while preservation would include any work which stops the building from ageing, such as the use of consolidative chemicals; all of these sub-terms can result in a vastly different end result. For instance, repair can sometimes help to maintain the original fabric of a building (Aplin 2002: 69), while restoration performed subtly can help to 'manage change' (Drury 2006: 38) via rebuilding the fabric in an aesthetic as close to the original as possible; both fall under the remit of conservation, and both approach the subject in a different manner. It has been recognised by previous conservators that the term conservation is often used as a catch-all designation owing to it being a multi-disciplinary field (Camuffo 1997: 65), thus the term conservation has been interpreted as bearing no difference in meaning to preservation (Drury 2006: 38). Contrary to what

Paul Drury writes, the key word to describe conservation is proactive and this is where it differs to the term preservation, which aims to maintain heritage to one epoch in history.

There has been a movement in recent years to replace the term conservation with consolidation (Myrin 2006: 9), the term subsumes all aspects which aim to fix any damage to a monument or building. Consolidation may be perceived as the stabilisation of a damaged portion of a building (Myrin 2006: 8) or the 'reinforcing' of a weakened area of a building or monument (Stanley-Price 2006: 102); thus any consolidation work on a historic building will attempt to stop any more damage being wrought via a number of methods including the renewal of disintegrating mortar, repair of damaged stonework and the rebuilding of portions of a structure. The use of consolidation techniques is widespread and its employment at heritage sites is not in dispute. The crucial discourse within the sphere of conservation work must be- how far do we take remedial work? This question has been posed previously by John Stubbs (1995: 74) but it is not a new one, nor an easy one to answer; this debate has been continuing since the late 19th-century when the great restorations of many English and French monuments occurred in the wake of European awakening to heritage protection. It was in this period that the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), which are discussed further below, was formed.

4.2 Restricted intervention and the retention of authenticity

It has been stated in the past that preservation of historic buildings and monuments have only been regarded as a worthwhile endeavour among intellectual elites for four generations (Ashworth 1997: 95). This statement is true, the mid 19th-century was a period of awakening for many concerned philanthropists, architects and citizens. There were two opposing idioms of thought in the 19th-century regarding reconstruction and renovation of historic buildings. Notable pro-restorers during this period were French architect Viollet Le Duc (1814-1879), and the English architects James Wyatt (1746-1813) and Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812-1852) (Null 1985: 27). Viollet Le Duc was the primary proponent of reconstruction during this period (Burman 1997: 272) and was responsible for reconstructing the church of Notre Dame de Lausanne and the Church of Saint Nazaire in Carcassonne amongst many others. James Wyatt who preceded Le Duc was an equally prolific architect who restored Durham and

Salisbury Cathedrals amongst many others. Both 'modified' buildings and restored using conjecture in places, their belief was clear, any amount of restoration was allowed to rewind the building back to its original perceived state, this included removing newer additions such as plaster, façades and walls. These architects gained the moniker (given by William Morris) 'scrapists' owing to their fondness for removing historic fabric such as plaster (Null 1985: 27).

The restorations performed by architects such as Le Duc and Wyatt angered and horrified some of their contemporaries; indeed, Wyatt became vilified for his work, being described as a vandal (Null 1985: 27). It was this perceived destruction of historic fabric and loss of knowledge which galvanised those opposed to what they saw as wholesale destruction of historical knowledge which was replaced with forgeries and inauthentic fakes. It was an era when the Gothic revival saw a lot of buildings restored back to a single period by other architects (Drury 2006: 35) and 18th-century picturesqueness was seen as a quality to be protected (Jokilheto 1999: 50). In complete contradicting opposition to these architects during the mid 19th-century was English philanthropist John Ruskin, (1819-1900), scholar and campaigner William Morris (1834-1896), George Street (1824-1881) and Louis Petit (1801-1868); all were unequivocally against any form of restoration, believing it to destroy the very nature of the building. John Ruskin, alongside William Morris, is perhaps the most iconic and well known anti-restoration campaigner; his book *The Seven Lamps of Architecture* describes how any form of removal of historic fabric should not occur; he saw buildings as unique structures which must never be restored to a previous epoch (Jokilheito 1999: 175). Ruskin was himself not an architect, rather, he was philanthropist who very much cared for the history of buildings, the concept of memory, and the 'resonance of history' (Parkyn 1998: 126). He lacked the necessary restoration skills himself, but he did travel widely; in particular, he travelled to Venice to record the historic cathedrals of the city and charted this in his trilogy, *The Stones of Venice.* John Ruskin was certainly one of the most vocal opponents of poorly constructed restorations during this period, but he was not alone in his viewpoint.

The Cambridge Camden Society was formed in 1839, primarily to study the architecture of ecclesiastical buildings but it quickly became critical of the restorations performed in churches and vocalised these concerns in its journal *The Ecclesiologist*; they took the stance that restoration is harmful and deceitful and should not be

performed, although they took the view that careful repair was acceptable (Null 1985: 29).This was essentially a precursor group to the formation of *The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB)* by William Morris in 1877, which arose from the unsympathetic restorations of the Victorian era. It cemented the position of many anti-restoration advocates and gave a platform for them to be heard in unison; it is reported that in less than a year it had gained over 300 members (Null 1985: 35). Clearly there were many members of the upper class who threw their weight behind the anti-restoration stance. Their fundamental viewpoint compared historic buildings to a historical document; as a way of remembering and interpreting the past. To them, all periods of history were equally important, unlike many other architects of this period who as noted above wished to restore buildings back to the Gothic period. The establishment of SPAB is extremely important in the the history of conservation in England, and indeed the world; they were not the first group to take a negative view against over zealous restorations, but they were the first with serious intentions and power to change the way architects performed restorations, gaining the support of politicians such as Benjamin Disraeli during the campaign to save St Mark's cathedral in Venice. Their movement influenced later architects in their decisions to not alter the historic fabric without sufficient reasons; for example, Sigurd Curman (1879-1966), the Swedish architect who performed the restoration at Vreta Kloster castle in the Ostergotland region, Sweden, between 1915-1917 was heavily influenced by their writings. He has been regarded as a great architect who performed moderate restorations (although not as reserved as perhaps Ruskin and Morris may have advocated) and he was keen to retain Vreta Kloster's integrity (Edman 2010: 53-4).

Both SCAP and Ruskin were both integral to the formation of the idea of minimal intervention and have had an enormous impact on how western conservators and heritage scholars approach and view repair and restoration. The drafting and passing of the RIGA Charter of Authenticity in 2000 can be interpreted as the culmination of their hard work in maintaining authenticity of historic buildings. Current discourse between conservation experts has resulted in the approach taken by John Ruskin and SCAB being embraced in western countries; the terms minimal or restricted intervention have been adopted to describe the way heritage specialist should approach the repair or reconstruction of heritage, of course not all conservators follow this ethos, but it is considered by many to be the standard to aspire to.

Restricted or minimal intervention is an important linchpin within heritage conservation discussion and is particularly compatible with the process of consolidation, where the ethos of only repairing and renewing historic materials (such as mortar and bricks) where fundamentally necessary, can be implemented. Essentially, supporters believe only the bare minimum of repair and restoration should be completed upon a structure, thus the remit behind restricted intervention is to only repair and restore when structurally necessary (Thompson 1981: 25), or if part of a building becomes dangerous to the public. It is supported by scholars in many cases out of a fear of eroding the authenticity of a building and removing what makes the structure or monument historically significant and has been cited as the benchmark for judging whether conservation efforts can claim to have been performed to a high standard (Ashworth 1997: 97). Consolidating a structure (or portions within) when only necessary is advocated by many conservation specialists and the use of minimal restoration techniques is preferred over mass repair or renovation work. Many conservators and heritage specialist use this term as a basic principle when deciding how to conserve a historic structure (Powter and Ross 2005: 6). To this end, UNESCO has recognised consolidation as an important tenet when repairing damaged historic buildings. Catherine Woolfitt reported that a number of conservation proposals sent to UNESCO for approval have been rejected for not using the narrower term of consolidation (2007: 148), their justification being that they do not follow the guidelines set in the RIGA Charter of Authenticity (2000).

Retaining the original fabric of a historic building is deemed of paramount importance by conservators, any intervention will damage authenticity to some degree, no matter how slight (Ashworth 1997: 97), but this erosion of authenticity may be limited to the very minimum a structure requires to survive. Jeff Cody and Kecia Fong's point that heritage reflects memory, identity, lifestyles and relationships (2007: 265) supports the idea of retaining original built fabric as any type of alteration will impact on both the original message a society were trying to tell and our ability to interpret their history and culture. Therefore, restricted intervention and consolidation are integral to any repair and re-constructive plan to maintain authenticity. The retention of authenticity and the use of minimal intervention are recognised standards of quality to work towards when conservation plans are created for Coptic heritage sites in Egypt. It is clear that maintaining the historic fabric or architectural features and thus preserving what makes a particular building or site authentic should be the

top priority when assessing any case study in this thesis and all treatments should not be too invasive or damaging. With this in mind, consolidation has a proven track record of helping to maintain as much authenticity of a structure, while still completing the required aims of conserving and repairing the site to a high standard.

Consolidation techniques have been utilised at heritage sites across the world where retaining authenticity has been deemed to be of paramount importance; retention of authenticity at these sites has been governed in a number of different ways. The fortress of Masada in Israel (where the Jewish Zealots made their last stand against the Roman Empire in the 1st-century AD) has undergone extensive repairs during the 1990's to its external walls and internal structures. The case study reported that tile mats were salvaged from another area of the site to use when rebuilding the bottom of a wall (Ashurst, Shalon and Woolfitt 2007: 283). These were of the same age and appearance to the stonework it was replacing and thus to the untrained eye it would not be detectable that a repair had been performed.

Fig 4.1: A wall at the fortress of Masada being repaired using original tile (Ashurst, Shalon and Woolfitt 2007: 284)

The reuse of spare, original materials such as bricks, stone blocks and tiles (Fig 4.1) is one method of retaining the authenticity and original fabric of these site, however, in many circumstances there may not be enough original masonry to repair the damage. In these cases, many heritage managers opt to use specially cut-to-order masonry which can be a facsimile of the original damaged stone. The use of replica

stones is commonplace and often they are artificially distressed to mimic the original stone or brick. This consolidation via sympathetic style is quite commonplace and supported by scholars such as Michael Thompson (Thompson 1981: 71). This technique was, again, used at Masada, where the stones of the *Tholos* (a circular structure) were pre-cut and inserted and also at one of Italy's most iconic buildings; The Leaning Tower of Pisa. This case study documented the conservative efforts of an Italian team of conservators and how they retained both the authenticity of the tower but also the honesty with visitors (Wijesuriya 1999: 156). Consolidation of the Leaning Tower of Pisa required the removal of bricks or stone only when their destruction or weakness would result in structural instability, this means that many of the bricks can and have degraded but as they are not life threatening to the tower (or humans) they have not been consolidated or replaced; this gives the tower an authentic and aged appearance. Any stones which may destabilise the structure are replaced with specially pre-cut stones made from the original material and to the original specifications and size; these are inscribed with the date they were inserted into the building to communicate to visitors they are fake masonry and not part of the original structure. Examples of creating an authentic facsimile are not limited to stone masonry; the temple of Shunet el Zebib in Egypt was reconstructed using mud brick. The conservation team took a sample away for analysis, studied its composition and then recreated this so it was as authentic as possible when they rebuilt the mud brick walls (Jones 2008a:112-3).

These examples offer an insight into how both authenticity and minimal intervention are mutually compatible, but often there are larger issues with built heritage and seldom are the problems only a few degraded bricks. In these circumstances, all other options must be considered before making a decision. Clearly this is a topic which has implications for historic Coptic buildings and ruins. Many Christian churches and monasteries will not have 'spare' masonry to reuse, although some ruinous sites will have. Where possible, Christian buildings should reuse the original masonry, but this will not be feasible for many churches; for example, those in urban Cairo will have no extra masonry to reuse. This, as we shall see, is an issue which pertains mainly to the urban Coptic historical sites. The other option would be to use copies that are distressed; this would work well in many old churches and should be debated on a case-by-case basis.

The use of original materials to reconstruct part of a heritage site is considered by some to be the most legitimate way of consolidating a structure, with the use of replicas which have been pre-distressed to fit in with the overall aesthetic of the building being viewed as an acceptable second option. These are not the only options available to heritage managers and the use of authentic looking facsimiles is debatable among heritage scholars with the contrary argument being that replicas are not being honest with visitors. These new reconstructions are considered fake, with scholars wondering if the public would still consider the site an authentic historic building if they knew how much had been altered and replaced (Bonnette 2001: 133). The idea that the public may not be able to discern between a reconstruction or a new build is illustrated with the case study presented by Azza Eleishe; he uses the example of the 'old quarter' of al-Balad in the Saudia Arabian city of Jeddah. Here, the quarter is being conserved and redeveloped after years of neglect; many new buildings are being erected in both a new style which is sympathetic to the historic original and one which is a facsimile to the original historic buildings (Eleishe 2010: 36). He noted that a study demonstrated that students looking at pictures of both the modern reconstructions and the originals could not differentiate between the two examples. It clearly illustrates that there is a need to demonstrate to the public and visitors which is a reconstruction and what is the original fabric of buildings as they often cannot differentiate between reconstructions and original builds.

The stones used at Pisa circumnavigate this thorny issue by being clearly identifiable to the visitor that the stone is a replica, and perhaps the use of authentic copies while notifying the public via either a carving on the stone or an information board nearby is the easiest and least intrusive way of maintaining honesty with the visitor. A pertinent example from Egypt is the reconstruction of the Serapeum in Saqqara; this took place over a nine-year period from 2001 to 2010 (Luxor Times 2012). The reconstruction was completed to a high standard, consolidating and reinforcing the unstable walls and utilising masonry which was obviously fake but still fitted in with the aesthetic of the tombs. This was part of an overall conservation campaign which also included cleaning the salt accumulation from the walls and installation of new humidity sensors.

Fig 4.2: Overview of the historic walls of the fortress of Masada (Ashurst, Shalon and Woolfitt 2007: 289)

Contradicting the notion that rebuilding parts of a building must be completed in a sympathetic style is the concept of reconstruction using modern materials in a contemporary style. If heritage structures are not to be rebuilt in the style they were before destruction, then the only other option is to use modern materials so a visitor would instantly recognise it was a reconstruction or repair; there are previous case studies of well executed reconstructions which have incorporated obviously modern materials. The most visually effective way of subverting the problem may be to rebuild parts of the site, such as walls, smaller monuments, entrance-ways and floors in a style that is indistinguishable to the original, and delineate it as an obviously a new build using a material that is distinctively different such as nails or small stones (Woolfitt 2007: 155). This technique has been employed at heritage sites outside of Egypt with good results; the site of Masada which has been previously discussed, reconstructed walls with nails to denote new fabric; this is quite an elegant solution and does not impose aesthetically too much. This technique, much like the use of conjecture, is not without its detractors, Paul Drury believes that demarcation of the new work can stop the building from being unified (1994: 198) and may ruin its essential character. This is a genuine concern amongst conservators, but generally, this technique is supported by scholars using the positive words of honesty, truthfulness (Thompson 1981: 20, 71), integrity and 'good' (Colwell-Chanthonopah 2009: 106). When one studies these nouns and adjectives, they are extremely vague in their meaning. One may interpret them as an obvious build, where one can delineate the old work from the new, hence being

honest and truthful with visitors and thereby keeping its integrity by not fooling the public into thinking the site is completely original.

If authenticity of Egyptian Christian heritage sites is to be preserved, then the reuse of original masonry should be an accepted part of the consolidation process, it is likely that at larger sites such as Abu Mina there may be masonry debris which may be suitable to be used in the consolidation process, but other buildings such as the churches of Cairo will not have any spare masonry to reuse. Therefore, any conservation plan for Coptic heritage sites should account for the reincorporation of historic masonry into the consolidation of the buildings where possible. If this is not possible then replica masonry is to be used in the consolidation of Christian buildings, it should maintain a sympathetic or inconspicuous style and the public must be informed of which parts are original and authentic and which stones are replicas. The ability to delineate the new consolidated masonry with the original is a topic which is contested among scholars, but the author believes it is an excellent middle ground, between retaining the authenticity of the historic building and being honest with any visitor. It is a simple technique to incorporate into the consolidation and repair of Coptic buildings and is an extremely effective tool for retaining the the overall visual aesthetic of a historic church or monastery while it is clear to all which parts are not original.

Unfortunately, (but not unsurprisingly), not all modern reconstructions and repairs are performed to a high standard; the signal case study for extremely poor reconstruction and restoration work is displayed at the Armenian Aghtamar Monastery on Lake Van, Turkey. The conservation efforts at the monastery were performed to a shockingly low standard and did not follow any of the rules regarding minimal intervention; many original historic features of the monastery, such as parts of the wall and floor which were originally built in 1763 were removed and replaced with modern pre-fabricated blocks and paving slabs (Fig 4.3) (Virtualani 2007). Some (particularly Armenian activists) have regarded the restoration solely a political act, the Turkish authorities being needed to be ‘seen’ to act on the issue of historical churches within the borders of what for is now at least a secular state with a massive Islamic majority (Virtualani 2007). It is not the place here to detail the ongoing and historical antagonism between Christian Armenia and Muslim Turkey, but the case study does offer useful parallels to a consideration of the management of Egyptian Christian heritage (the crucial difference of course is that Copts are ethnic Egyptians and live

within the nation's borders).

There is a marked difference between the examples of restoration at the historic middle eastern sites of Masada and Aghtamar; both use modern materials, yet their use is diametrically different. At Masada, no original masonry was removed which was not already structurally damaged, the conservators followed the principles of minimal intervention and the walls were rebuilt in a sympathetic style using modern materials. At the Monastery of Aghtamar, removal of original masonry which was not structurally damaged has occurred, the modern stone stands out in stark contrast to the 18th-century stonework and the historically important roof was removed (**Fig 4.4**) (it should be noted there was no structural problems with the roof) and replaced with modern concrete (Virtualani 2007).

Fig 4.3: A picture of a prefabricated block used in the renovation of the Monastery of Aghtamar (VirtualAni 2007)

The marked difference between the two is clearly the removal of fabric which was not damaged and its replacement with unsuitable materials such as Portland cement. At Masada compatibility and minimal reconstruction were the primary aims; consolidation procedures were performed with the reuse of original material and specially precut stones which mimicked the originals and any repair and consolidation was performed because it was structurally necessary. Unfortunately, poor reconstructions and removal of historic building materials during conservation

treatments are common throughout Egypt also. A recent conservation project at the Cairo Railway Museum in 2012 highlighted significant flaws in the owner's approach to conserving the 1930's structure. It was reported that the original lights and floor tiles dating to 1933 were removed and modern replacements were installed in their place (Cairo Observer 2012). No attempt was made to retain the authentic elements of the building and what made it an authentic 1930's building.

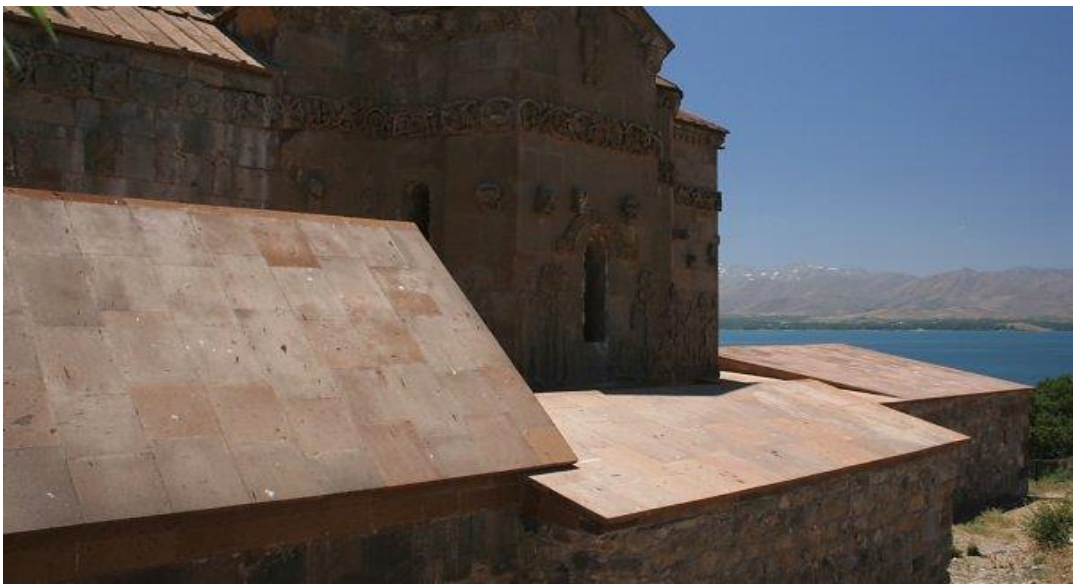

Fig 4.4: The reconstructed roof of the Aghtamar Monastery (VirtualAni.org 2007)

The removal of original historic fabric, whether they be light fittings, wooden beams or masonry is completely at odds with the ideal of retention of authenticity, and has no place in the conservation of Coptic heritage. The only time it may be permitted is if the masonry is so badly degraded it creates a significant structural weakness or if there is absolutely no other option to remedy a problem which, if not stopped, will result in the loss of the building or part of the structure. The use of modern materials is a contentious issue, as noted in the above discussion, but I would argue that the intent of the conservator is more important; Masada used modern stonework but it was used sparingly, no original material was removed unnecessarily and it fitted in with the aesthetic of the ruins. The restoration of the Monastery of Aghamatar, while it used modern materials, removed historic fabric when they did not need to and it did not fit in with the historic aesthetic. These two examples could not be further from each other in quality; Christian sites in Egypt should follow the tenets and example of Masada, the use of modern materials is warranted as long as it is controlled, measured and fits in with the aesthetic of the church.

4.3 Compatibility and Reversibility

One of the most important tenets when reconstructing and consolidating historic fabric is to make sure any materials are compatible and reversible, if any material is incompatible then it can result in disastrous and long lasting damage to the fabric of the building. One of the most commonly used modern material which is used to consolidate and repair historic stonework is mortar; unlike stone and bricks, one cannot reuse the original mortar, ergo it must always be a modern mortar used to bond masonry. The main aim of re-mortaring (also known as re-pointing) masonry is to consolidate and improve the structural integrity; therefore, it is of paramount importance to utilise a mortar which is physically and aesthetically compatible. It is a well held belief that the new mortar should not compromise the overall characteristic of the building (Myrin 2006: 33), this is strongly emphasised by most conservators (Bromblet 2006); if a mortar is not compatible there are far reaching consequences to the structural integrity of the building. For example, if a wall is made from limestone, then a lime-based mortar must be used to re-point the masonry if the wall is not to face future structural problems. The use of incompatible materials at historic buildings has been documented in past case studies with results which have often left the building in a far more degraded condition than when conservators first attempted to consolidate. Often, one of the most common building material utilised to consolidate historic buildings is cement; conservator John Ashurst lists this as one of the most harmful and inappropriate treatments to be used on historic masonry (1990: 1).

It is improper, for example, to use modern materials such as cement on a lime based mortar (Torraca 1981: 112); the reason for this is the incompatibility of cement to lime mortar. It restricts any moisture movement and causes equally damaging spalling and blistering[11] as the moisture tries to exit the stone or brick any way it can which forces the masonry to crack and break (Franke and Schumann 1998: 31); in addition, it also leaks calcite into any stones which are more porous (Winkler 1994: 134). There are many examples of cement being employed at historic sites but one of the most illustrative examples of damage via cement were temples in Madagascar. David Rasmuel documented the damage created by 'conservators' who poured

[11] Blistering is a technical term in conservation, it occurs when the top layer of masonry swells, causing the loss of bond with the underlying material. Spalling is the process of salt crystallization beneath the surface of bricks and stonework causing the disintegration of the front layer (Franke and Schumann 1998: 11; 31).

concrete over walls, completely covering them and re-pointed others with cement (1989: 133). This can obviously be regarded as a very poor conservation job; it is not reversible and the modern cement is not compatible with the lime mortar. Ultimately this will lead to cracking of the masonry and the disintegration of stonework over time. It is not only in Madagascar where this type of inappropriate treatments occurs; the Al Azhar mosque (972AD) in Cairo was renovated in 1997 by conservators; the walls here were repaired with modern Portland cement (Dumbaru, Burke et al 2000: 96), covering over any original historic material. Other examples from Egypt really drive home the need for decent materials to be used during the reconstruction phase. The palace of Mohamed Ali Pasha (1808-1821) was consolidated and repaired between 2005-2011, but it has recently been reported that improper materials were used during the reconstruction which has resulted in the partial collapse of the roof and domes (Bassara Heritage 2013). The previously discussed example of the Aghtamar Monastery in eastern Turkey was also victim to this practice, with new pre-fabricated bricks integrated with the original masonry and bonded using modern cement (**Fig 4.5**) (virtualani 2007).

Although cement should never be used in historic buildings, any lime mortar must also be correctly mixed and used at the correct strength. Restorers of Fitzroy Presbyterium (built between 1872-1874) in Belfast, Ireland (Warke, Smith and Campbell 1999: 68) used an incompatible mortar which was too strong for the mortar which remained between the masonry; this restricted moisture movement and led to the cracking of bricks and mortar when the water had no egress. We have irrefutable evidence that a compatible mortar must be used and cement has no place in consolidating Egyptian Christian buildings or indeed any historic building across the world. When compatible mortars are used correctly, they are a powerful tool in the conservator's arsenal; compatible lime mortars have consolidated damaged walls effectively in a number of cases; the temple of Merenptah (c. 1213 BC) in Thebes, Egypt had many different problems including the retention of water which led to the crystallization of salts on the walls. One of the ways this could be remedied was to re-point the limestone bocks (in conjunction they tried to lower the nearby water table); it was completed in a style sympathetic to the original and was gypsum based (Arnold 2006: 51). The temple of Merenptah in Thebes mounted the damaged steles of the temple upon a modern compatible brick wall, it is obvious to the visitor it is modern but it is a reversible process which can be modified if need be (Fig 4.6) (Arnold 2006:

58). Therefore, they used compatible materials and in concurrence with other conservation processes such as draining the surrounding water table, they were able to reverse and allay the issues that had plagued the temple.

Fig 4.5: A conservator mixing modern Portland cement to be used in the renovation of the Aghatamar Monastery (VirtualAni 2007)

The utilisation of compatible materials, when consolidating and restoring Christian structures in Egypt must not fall victim to the same unprofessional and damaging practices noted in the above discussion. The use of any cement must be banned from use; its negative effects have been recorded at many other heritage sites across the world and while it may seem to be a cheap method of conservation, using it would be a grave mistake and would cause far more harm in the long term. We can conclude from the examples of Ali Pasha's palace and the Fitzroy Presybyterium that it is important to consult structural engineers and specialists when designing consolidation treatments, particularly when they relate to the structural integrity of the building. While the use of compatible mortars is an important facet to conservation, the other aspect which must be adhered to is the reversibility of any chemicals or mortars that may be used; this is one issue which all conservators agree on. One particularly popular option which can help retain the original historic building material is to employ the use of consolidant chemicals. During the conservation planning process, the decision to use chemicals or 'consolidants' is often discussed. Consolidants are organic and inorganic chemicals which are used to preserve portions of structures such as walls and floors via injection, spraying or painting onto historic

material as such as masonry, wood and plaster. The discourse surrounding the use of consolidant chemicals focuses upon if they damage the original structure or alter the appearance and thus eroding the authenticity of the structure and making them aesthetically unappealing and damaging their potential to tourists and local inhabitants.

Fig 4.6: Stele mounted upon a brick wall at the Temple of Mereneptah (Arnold 2006: 58)

The use of consolidant chemicals is generally accepted by conservators who see them as just another tool in their arsenal and as a way to circumnavigate a problem when physical restraints are not appropriate (Warke 1996: 35). Previous articles have supported their use, such as Sasse and Snethlage (1997: 212) and Price (2006: 104). The negativity surrounding the use of consolidants is borne from the possibility they may damage stonework irreversibly. Thus, most conservators now cite that any chemical used must be reversible (Bonora and Marchesini 1987: 323); this is a core tenet of using consolidant chemicals in the developed world, but there are no textbooks to determine how much chemicals should be used and in what circumstances (Stanley-Price 2007: 32). There are examples where chemicals have been added to a structure and have been damaged irreversibly. Angkor Wat in Cambodia was the focus of conservative efforts in 1986 by the Archaeological Survey of

India; they particularly damaged the stone by the use of acidic fungicides which removed lichens and fungus and then coated the stones with polyvinyl acetate which caused water to build up underneath this layer (Ciochon and James 1994: 42). In the long term these consolidants have destroyed the walls to these temples, and have caused a change in colour; this damage is irreversible and has negatively impacted upon the way the site is now perceived by the public. Thus, any chemicals used must be reversible, the idea being that if a more compatible chemical is created it may be used instead and there will be no long-term damage caused.

Not all scholars agree that the use of consolidant chemicals on their own is the way to successfully consolidate a structure, and has been regarded as naïve (Chanthaponh 2009: 160). Some conservators are wary of using certain chemicals to consolidate a structure, calling epoxy a 'poor craftsman's solder' (Ashley-Smith 2009: 14), but most appear to believe them a necessary evil to stop more damage to a structure in the long run if the tenets discussed above (reversibility, etc) are adhered to. It is of paramount importance that if any are to be used they must not change the appearance of the stonework and they must be reversible. Clearly there is a case for them to be used in certain circumstances; they can be an excellent and effective way of repelling water for example; the temple of Merenptah has benefited from the use of consolidant chemicals to stop the water from being reabsorbed by the limestone blocks. The use of consolidant chemicals can be advocated at Coptic sites; their use has been proven to worked and in some cases, it may be appropriate to use them when other more invasive techniques will alter the physical aesthetic of the structure.

4.4 Reconstructing historic buildings

There is a clear difference between focused consolidation of single elements within a historic building such as bricks and the rebuilding of whole parts of the historic entity. The previous case studies focused upon restoring and strengthening single elements of masonry but other heritage sites have undergone full reconstructions, built in a sympathetic style to the original masonry. In the earlier portion of the 20th-century heritage sites have not undergone consolidation, rather they have undergone a full reconstruction and renovation. These have courted controversy in the past; during 1947 and the 1950's the stupas in the city of Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka (**Fig 4.7**) were rebuilt by the government in a sympathetic style using the remaining patterns on the

ruinous stonework as inspiration, but crucially and varying wildly from Masada and Pisa, conjecture was used in many places. It was completed using skilled conservators and before any reconstruction was carried out, full written and photographic records were made so if the worst case scenario occurred and the original masonry were destroyed there was a full archaeological record made (Wijesuriya 2005: 41).

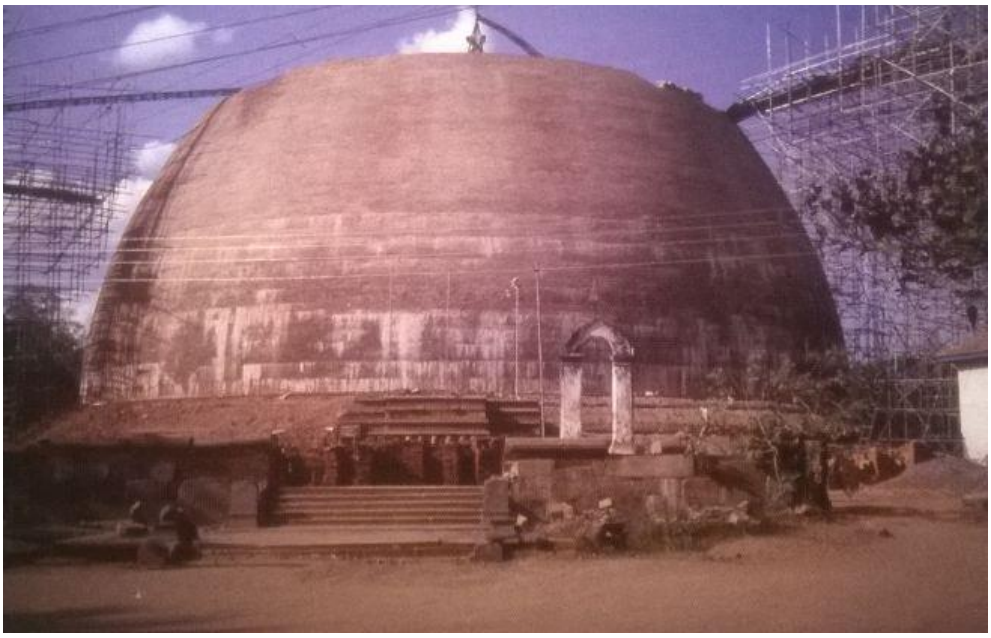

Fig 4.7: Reconstruction of Stupa, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka (Wijesuriya 2005: 31)

During that same period, sites were reconstructed from the ground up; an 18th-century French fortress in Louisberg, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia (Canada) was completely reconstructed with new masonry built upon the ruins (Woolfitt 2007: 149); as with Anuradhapura there was significant research including archaeological excavation to allow the conservators make an as accurate reconstruction as possible. Both were rebuilt using conjecture but in a sympathetic style to the original ruins. Clearly the problems many scholars have with this process are the lack of documented evidence to support the rebuilding. By using guesswork, albeit educated guesswork, one is removing all claims that the site is an authentic historic building and it is deceiving the public into thinking this is how the site looked originally when in fact there is no evidence to support this. The use of conjecture when reconstructing and renovating a building is often regarded as negative (White 2007: 250; Stanley-Price 2009: 37), and something which should not occur, however this is not to say a minority of scholars have come out in support of using a little conjecture in places; Gamina Wijesuriya supported this process as long as it was designed in a sympathetic style to

the original (2005: 41). There are exceptions to this rule though; several projects in the UK have built their reputation as a completely fake but 'authentic' reconstruction.

John Coles cites Butser farm as the perfect example of a completely fake, yet authentic looking reconstruction of an Iron Age village (Coles 1979: 43). These types of reconstruction are distinct from those which seek to renew damage; they use known archaeological evidence to create an as authentic as possible replica of the original building, they never utilise any original masonry or wood during the process and are distinct from the above case studies where reconstruction occurred over the ruins of temples and historic buildings. These reconstructions have been lauded by scholars who cite them as having many positive aspects such as starting debates over the past and can challenge its inaccuracies (Uzzell 1994: 297). For example, the Jorvik Viking Centre in York dealt with pre-conceived notions about Vikings by sending out a local survey to ascertain the level of misconceptions within the public (Addyman 1990: 258), this was used to build a reconstructed Viking village called Coppergate (complete with sights and smells) where at the beginning of the tour a video was presented which dispelled all these myths (Addyman 1990: 259). Indeed, Michael Thompson reiterates the point of reconstructions being a good source of tourist income when he says they can 'stimulate the minds eye' (1981: 17), and that it can have a potent effect on the public mind (Cleere 1984: 129). Authentic replicas are quite common and conservators in Egypt are leading the charge in using modern techniques to recreate the Tomb of Tutankhamun in the Valley of the Kings, Thebes. A 3D scanner was employed to map the original tomb and this was then used to recreate every inch of the tomb in exact detail (Al-Ahram 2013b). It may be concluded that this is an excellent reconstruction, its benefits will include reducing the amount of visitors to the original tomb, yet tourists will still be able to appreciate all of the tombs design and intricacies in exact facsimile. Other examples include the caves at Lascaux, France have an exact replica of the cave art nearby (Aplin 2002: 9), where visitors can touch without fear of damaging the original. The work of the Institute for Digital Archaeology should also be included in this discussion; this is an organisation which collaborates with scholars to use digital scanning techniques to reconstruct destroyed heritage monuments. Their most recent project was recreating Palmyra's triumphal arch which was destroyed by the Islamic terrorist group ISIS, using these techniques (BBC 2016). These examples show reconstructions may be used effectively to teach the public about the site and remain honest with them and retain authenticity. Crucially though they do not build over or

reconstruct historic buildings or monuments and instead are completely separate entities.

It may be concluded that it is acceptable to reconstruct a building if you have existing photographic evidence or the ability to scan and map the structure to build a facsimile of the original as there would be no conjecture, but this opens new questions above the issue of honesty and transparency; Ian Handler frames this debate by asking- what moment in time do we restore to? (Handler 2003: 357). This question was posed at Windsor Castle in Berkshire, UK, one of the highest profile reconstructions in recent history. It is a castle built in the Norman period in the 11th -century, and has been architecturally added to over the past 1000 years, it has accumulated numerous rebuilds and minor repairs from bygone eras and styles. It was ravaged by fire in 1992 (Fowler 2006: 4), and once it was gutted, the question posed by the team tasked with rebuilding it was- should it be rebuilt as it was in the 1992, as it was first built in the 11th century without the later additions (Fowler 2006: 4), or perhaps a period in between? Ultimately it was decided the castle should be restored exactly as it had been before the fire destroyed it, but this was only possible owing to the vast amount of pictures taken of the Castle which allowed conservators to rebuild it as it once was. By rebuilding as it once was using photographs and plans, one is retaining authenticity although this argument could theoretically be used to advocate the deconstruction of a building and movement to another site as long as it was accurately recorded and re-bonded; this obviously must be only completed in the gravest of circumstance, for example the temple of at Philae was moved by UNESCO as it would have been submerged by the redirected river Nile once the Aswan Dam was built. There is the obvious point that moving it may remove its significance by taking it out of its context, but scholars have noted previously that this can be the correct course of action in some circumstances (Ashworth 1997: 97).

To return the debate to Egypt, this decision whether to rebuild a portion of the site in a sympathetic style or not can ultimately determine the response visitors and the local Coptic community have towards the site and may bring into disrepute the historical honesty of the building. The use of conjecture and guesswork can have no place in the rebuilding of historic Coptic buildings, the noted 'good' case studies of Masada and Pisa show that by only replacing what has been previously recorded and photographed, and crucially necessary, one can retain as much authenticity at a

heritage site as is possible. By reconstructing the unknown, we are guilty of possibly creating something which has never existed before. Therefore, it would be inadvisable to reconstruct or consolidate a building if there were no previous photographic surveys or documentation of the site and would thus rule out the reconstruction of any Coptic archaeological ruins; it may be permissible if a site was destroyed by faith militants for example, however.

During the reconstruction process there are decisions which must be made regarding the removal of historic fabric. Renovation and restoration of historic buildings often results in the removal of fabric such as plaster and mortar. The removal of any kind of material which is unnecessary is regarded by scholars as a poor way of consolidating a building; there are however, a few scholars who believe it to be justified in certain circumstances (eg; Sullivan and Pearson 1995). If historic material such as plaster was covering over something which has an important cultural significance then it should be allowed (Sullivan and Pearson 1995: 232), although the material that is being removed must be fully documented and recorded beforehand (King 2008: 220); to put it into context, they support the removal of plain medieval plaster if it would reveal Coptic painted frescoes beneath it. There is a case for removal of historic material in certain circumstances such as an immediate threat of destruction, this has occurred at both the temple at Philae and at the Nubian Cathedral at Faras (c. AD150-250) in northern Sudan. Between 1960-1964, emergency conservation work was carried out by Polish archaeologist Casimir Michalowski; the building of the Aswan Dam had threatened buildings along the Nile river both in Egypt and Nubia, the excavation revealed over 120, 12th and 13th-century frescoes. These were removed from the site after being recorded and photographed (Michalowski 1962). They were displayed in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna as recently as 2010 (Euromuse 2010).

There is the fear by scholars of the return to the 'bad old days', when antiquarians would not record archaeology properly as seen in the excavation of Troy in Turkey by Heinrich Schliemann who is reported to have planted all his most valuable finds within the wrong stratigraphic deposits (Rose 1993). This is obviously something which we do not want to return to. There is a risk also of elevating one period of history above the others, by removing the medieval plaster and displaying the Roman; we are making a statement that the Roman period of architecture is more important

than any others; this was named the principle of preference by art historian Stephen Tschudi-Madsen (Null 1985: 28). This kind of fabric removal has been poorly received in the past by scholars; King John's house in the village of Tollard Royal, Dorset was once owned by the archaeologist General Pitt Rivers, the wall façades displayed two distinct periods, early English and Tudor. He removed the later Tudor architectural features only when it concealed the earlier (Smith 1985: 7; 10).

Another salient example is the Armenian Merchant's palace (c. 12-13th century) in the city of Ani, Turkey. The palace gateway façade was constructed with an interconnecting star design which was in a poor condition, many of the stars could not be discerned owing to degraded stone falling off. The restoration in 1999 altered the façade completely by moving the original tiles which could be salvaged and placed them into a different position, in addition part of the surviving arch had been removed (VirtualAni 2007). These examples only support Janet Null's assertion that restoration is a destructive act (1985: 32). When the removal of fabric does not reveal anything culturally relevant then it should not be attempted; Nicholas Stanley-Price succinctly sums up the opposing argument when he states the primary period of occupation should be displayed but subsequent ones should never be removed (Stanley-Price 1995: 75). He is not alone, other scholars (Sasse and Snethlage 1997: 226) also believe that repair should not attempt to improve buildings. At Salisbury Cathedral, inappropriate additions have been made to many of the statues in the 19th-century (Fig 4.8), Michael Drury states in his case study that these additions should not be removed and left as they are (Drury 2006: 55). The argument is not as simple as first thought, if Coptic wall paintings (as seen at the monastery of St Antony) which are important to the local church and hold enormous religious significance are partially covered by blank white plaster, there is a case for them to be carefully removed, but only if they culturally relevant, the bar must be set high.

If we are not to remove any historic material such as mortar or masonry, we have only two options left open to us, leave the site to degrade naturally or try to employ non-invasive techniques. There are some scholars who believe damaged and ruined buildings should not be reconstructed and should be left to degrade naturally; Henry Cleere observed back in 1984 some purists are against any form of reconstruction, including repairs and consolidation (Cleere 1984: 129). He regarded this as unreasonable but a select number of scholars concur this is the correct course of

action (Emerick 2001: 277); David Lowenthal attributes them the title of the modern day followers of Ruskin and Morris (Lowenthal 2005: 89); as discussed earlier in this chapter, these architects were fervently against any type of restoration work.

Fig 4.8: A figure at Salisbury Cathedral in advanced state of decay (Drury 2006: 54)

The primary reason for leaving historic buildings untouched is that they are more evocative and beautiful in their ruinous state and it is what makes them significant in the first place (Woolfitt 2007: 151), their beauty has been cited as a contributing factor when deciding against reconstruction (Something Jorge Otero-Pailos determined was important when determining what to conserve; Ostero Pailos et al 2010; 50). Dario Camuffo supported this stance and questions whether it is aesthetically better to leave monuments to age naturally (1997: 65). Allowing structures to decay is not a popular decision in the mainstream conservation world; the acceptance that a monument must not be allowed to just decay is not a modern one. JJ Bourasse in 1845 is quoted as saying we must not allow a monument to decay for art's sake (Jokilheito 1999: 149). Modern day detractors of deliberate abandonment (eg. Mbunwe-Samba 2001: 37), reiterate what is generally thought, that we must not deliberately let monuments and sites be destroyed and left to decay. We can conclude that leaving ruins as they are is not a popular decision and the slow degradation of historic buildings and monuments should not be allowed too occur in any

circumstances.

4.5 Conclusion

Sifting through the debate, there are obvious benefits in following the remit of restricted intervention, consolidation and reversibility. The key goal to aim for is the retention of authenticity of the historic building, and realistically this can be achieved through a number of different means. The Copts have an extensive built patrimony and all are in varying degrees of disrepair; their buildings are still culturally relevant and are in use by both the church and the local laity, therefore any conservation work that is carried out will have a long-lasting effect upon the local community. It is therefore prudent to aim to consolidate and strengthen any weakened masonry. The removal of historic fabric is a more complex topic, many scholars may hold the view that fabric should not be removed under any circumstances, but there may be Coptic frescoes which may hold significance to the Coptic church and its community, in these cases the fabric is permitted to be removed as long as it is completed by qualified conservators; there have been excellent results at the Monastery of St Antony in this regard.

If at all possible the reuse of historic fabric should be aimed for, but realistically this may not be attainable, the other options of rebuilding in either a sympathetic style or one more contemporary is a quandary but perhaps the style of the build is less important than being honest with the visitor and notifying them what is an authentic part of the site. This is perhaps, along with the retention of authenticity, the main aim of our conservative efforts, this is why the use of conjecture should not be permitted. If conjecture is allowed, even in a sympathetic style it essentially lies to the visitor who would unwittingly believe this reconstruction is how it looked in the past. When examining each case study in this thesis, these arguments should be referred to when deciding which is the best course of conservative action. Having discussed the role conservation plays in the management of Christian sites in Egypt, the next chapter examines the role of tourism, the rise of ‘heritage tourists’, and some of the problems tourists can cause at Christian heritage sites in Egypt.

Chapter 5- The heritage 'consumer'

5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses upon heritage tourism and how it relates to the management, conservation, interpretation and promotion of Christian heritage sites within Egypt. The role tourism plays in heritage management is considerable, often it can either support the conservation of a site and act as a boon if managed carefully and effectively, or conversely it can have the potential to destroy the heritage it promotes. It is truly a double-edged sword that has its own unique set of problems. This chapter will first attempt to define what types of tourism are available to consumers and more specifically will examine heritage tourism and the motivations behind visiting these particular types of site. Secondly, this chapter will broadly examine Egyptian tourism and how Christian heritage sites fit into the overall tourism scheme in Egypt. Finally, how interpretation is applied at Egyptian heritage sites will be discussed and how the Copts can benefit from using interpretation to enhance and protect their vast patrimony. So, firstly let us examine the two categories of tourism defined by scholars; mass and niche tourism.

The tourism industry has divided the types of tourism into two broad categories; mass tourism and niche tourism. Mass tourism is quantified by a popular destination visited by a large amount of visitors. The advent of this type of travel began in Western Europe during the 1970's and 1980's (Mowforth and Munt 1998: 16) when ordinary people could suddenly afford to travel abroad with their families; with more free time and low cost airlines, Myra Shackley reports an increase in people travelling to foreign locales with their families (Shackley 2006: 84). This type of tourism is prevalent, but in recent years the idea of niche, or alternative tourism, has become popular and is touted as being the diametric opposition of mass tourism. Alternative tourism can be broadly described as anything other than mass tourism; it encompasses all types of different approaches, but at its heart it sells itself as the antithesis of uncontrolled mass tourism, it is responsible in its outlook and aims to offer targeted getaways to small groups or lone travellers who wish in many cases to create their own itinerary.

Organised mass tourism is at present challenged by specialist holidays; this does not mean that mass tourism has been completely replaced, moreover it has been engaged in a battle for revenues by new, more targeted holidays, getaways and solo backpackers. Reportedly, organised mass tourism is still the most prevalent of the two (Shackley 1998: 111), but alternative tourism has taken hold as a response to the more aggressive mass marketed package tours on offer (Johnston 2006: 7), and act as a counterweight by offering more choice to the consumer. ICOMOS have previously supported this type of tourism, citing cultural tourism as small, well managed and educational (ICOMOS 1993: 3). Both of these types of tourism are prevalent across Egypt, and heritage sites need to cater to both types of tourist if they are to increase revenues and provide an engaging, worthwhile experience for the visitor. The primary sub-genre of tourism that will affect Coptic heritage sites is known as heritage tourism; this type of tourism will be explored further in section 5.2.

5.2 Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism can be succinctly categorised as tourism which focuses upon the act of viewing localities, sites, buildings or even countries which hold a particular historical interest for the tourist, the region or the world. One of the main motivations for visitors is that of wanting to visit the heritage sites of a foreign country, once a niche market, these heritage tours are now much more popular and widespread (Helmy and Cooper 2008: 179). These are often offered by smaller tour companies who tailor the experience for the tourist. Motivations for travel are complex, but some scholars such as Sue Millar have devised a list of reasons for travel; she asserts there are five differing reasons for travel (Millar 2006: 49): Purposeful, sightseeing, serendipitous, casual culture and incidental. If we take Sue Millar's groupings at face value it would suggest that there are two different types of visitor; those who purposefully seek out a place to visit (purposeful, sightseeing, casual), and those who either stumble upon the site, and did not plan in advance (serendipitous, incidental). Those who are on a niche tour such as trekking for example, can be put into both the purposeful and sightseeing brackets, while those who are interested in perhaps the art, architecture or history of Christian buildings on a heritage tour may also be put into the same brackets. The other types of tourists who may visit sites on a whim or on an unscheduled stop can be put into the last three groups, serendipitous, casual culture and incidental; in other words, they are on a mass tour group and may not really have any interest in the site other than it is

just part of the holiday they paid for. Other scholars have suggested that the motivations for travel are far simpler, with tourists wishing escapism from the mundane, social prestige and social interaction (Page 1995: 25; Hall and Page 1999: 53). The motivations for visiting heritage sites are numerous, but one of the simplest is the pleasure of visiting an aesthetically pleasing locale or site.

'Architourism' as it has been dubbed (Wilson and McIntosh 2007: 76) is a new type of niche tour which is set up around the premise of visiting many buildings which host visually amazing architecture. Indeed, this type of tourism has been critiqued in previous papers (Poria, Butler and Airey 2003) and judged that many people want to visit places of historical importance and their unique aesthetic appearance (Poria, Butler and Airey 2003: 343). A good example of this is a study of visitors to Hawkin's Bay in New Zealand, 46 of the 66 polled said the heritage buildings was a good representation of their holiday and those with little interest in heritage said they were nice to look at and were interesting (Wilson and McIntosh 2007: 82-84). Gregory Wilson and Alison McIntosh concluded that it could be argued while Hawkin's Bay tells New Zealand's story, that visitors also created their own personal experience and meaning of the site (Wilson and McIntosh 2007: 86), there is no emotional or religious 'pull' to visit these sites. Of course, the ability to view aesthetically pleasing architecture is not the sole reason to travel to heritage sites, a big part of heritage tourism is religious travel, but it should be dealt with early on that religious travel such as pilgrimage and heritage/religious tourism are distinct from one another (Singhe 2004: 49). Perhaps the most well-known type of travel to heritage sites is the pilgrimage, a visit that has an inherent emotional component, something which is missing from ‘architourism’.

One of the primary types of heritage trip is that of the pilgrimage; pilgrimage is perhaps one of the oldest type of traditions (Cohen-Hattab 2010: 127) that one may make and is steeped in tradition going back millennia. In its strictest sense pilgrimage is the journey one makes to a sacred or religious place, whether this is a temple, church or mosque, or other sacred space. It has been comprehensively characterised as 'not purely travel to a sacred place, but religiously involved travel to a sacred place' (Singhe 2004: 49). We can interpret this to mean that if one travels to a church but is not going for the religious component and purely for the architecture, history or culture then this cannot be described as pilgrimage; it must contain an element of religious piousness.

Pilgrimage can be typified as a social event which brings people together; often those on pilgrimages travel in groups (Singh 2004: 47; Belhassen 2009: 142), it can be viewed as mass tourism due to its frequency and magnitude (Shinde 2007: 343), yet conversally it can also be judged to be a personal journey.

Often, it is talked of someone going on a 'personal pilgrimage'; a spiritual journey of self-discovery. This is a phenomenon not seen in all cultures or societies, but is prevalent within modern western society (Singhe 2004: 50). The motivation for wanting to visit a heritage site may be linked to a spiritual pilgrimage (Nyaupane and Timothy 2009: 8), indeed, there is the idea that on the trip they may find a sort of 'salvation' (Timothy and Boyd 2003: 3) by visiting these places. One of the more powerful examples of a personal pilgrimage is the idea of returning to one's homeland, visiting a place to which you had a strong familial connection to, or even where a significant event occurred within your life; this can be a powerful motivator for travelling to historical sites. One of the primary examples of this type of tourism is the concentration camp Auschwitz. Obviously, this concentration camp holds many powerful, strong and dark memories and emotions for the Jewish holocaust survivors. Tim Cole conducted an in-depth study into holocaust survivors and their motivations into returning; he concluded that there were a number of different factors which compelled them to return. The primary motivator was the survivor's adult children insisting they return to face their past (Cole 2013: 102), but many survivors also felt it was their duty to take their children to visit the place where atrocities were committed against their people (Cole 2013: 111). In a sense, they are teaching their relatives about their personal history and that of their religion, but also embarking upon a very personal pilgrimage.

A second study by Marcus Stephenson focusing upon the Caribbean residents of Moss Side in Manchester looked at motivations for travel back to the Caribbean and their heritage. A high proportion of respondents indicated that there was a sacred and spiritual component to returning home for them (Stephenson 2002: 395), the need to reconnect or search for one's cultural and ancestral roots was a common motivator (Stephenson 2002: 393). Personal pilgrimage often therefore contains an emotional component, but not an inherent religious aspect which pulls visitors to these sites and is an important part in the construction of their own identity. At Auschwitz for example, the survival of many Jewish people and their immediate family is identifiably

part of Jewish history and also a very personal story. It could be surmised from these studies that ethnic Copts whose family have moved away from Egypt, or those who feel an affinity or emotional attachment to the Coptic religion may attempt a pilgrimage to sites across Egypt that hold a personal, emotional attachment to them.

While personal pilgrimages are prevalent among western travellers, the archetypical view of religious pilgrimage in the west is travel to the Holy Land and the sites described in the Bible. Egypt, and many of the Coptic churches are sites where the Holy Family are reported to have rested at during their flight from Herod and as such will be a potential draw to certain denominations of Christians. Tourism to the Holy Land is very popular for many Christian travellers (Isaac 2010a: 27), therefore a consideration of the wider Christian heritage sites located in the Middle East should be explored, to help define the motivations of Christian travellers to the Holy Land and to Egypt.

Pilgrimage and religious tourism denotes a large proportion of visitors to the Holy Land; a survey conducted by Rami Isaac discovered that 91% of Pilgrims visited Bethlehem, Nazareth and Jerusalem (Isaac 2010a: 27). Many travelled specifically to places mentioned in the Old and New Testament in Israel, Palestine and Jordan, and other sites not mentioned in scripture (Ron 2009: 291). To support this interest, specialist tour companies have been created to organise travel to a variety of sites, provide food and accommodation within Israel and to offer a tour guide at the site. Yaniv Belhassen believes these tours inherently give pilgrims and travellers spiritual fulfilment, education and pleasure (Belhassen 2009:141). This trend of pilgrimage to heritage sites identified in the Bible is certainly more of a lure to certain denominations of Christians, for example, Evangelical Christians (often of a pro-Zionist, eschatological outlook) are part of a trend of mass pilgrimage to Biblical sites. Yaniv Belhassen's study of tour companies in the US who provided tour groups for evangelicals who wished to visited the Holy Land noted that they wished to visit places mentioned specifically in the Bible (Belhassen 2009: 135), supporting Amos Ron's previous assertion. Evangelical Christians he noted, were pro-Zionist and as such their 'centre' (or most holy religious site) was Israel (Belhassen 2009: 133). Israel and perhaps more specifically, Jerusalem is a very important place within Christianity, along with Nazareth and Bethlehem (Isaac 2010a: 27). Other denomnations of Christians found other types of visits to be fulfilling, for example, heritage ‘theme parks’ such as Nazareth Village and the Holy Land Park in

Galilee Shore are extremely popular, particularly with Protestant Christians (Ron 2009: 292). Therefore, it could be concluded that we may not band all Christians together when discussing religious tourism, instead, each denomination holds different Christian heritage sites with differing levels of importance and this will inevitably decide whether or not they wish to visit sites within Egypt.

Previous studies have shown that there is a distinctive interest in Christian heritage sites in the Middle East, with a particular interest in sites mentioned in the Bible. Not all of these sites are well managed, however. A lack of decent management can negatively impact upon the visitor experience and conversely a well-managed site will lead to a much more positive experience. A concerted effort to improve the visitor experience at Christian Holy sites such as Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Nazareth have been explored in recent studies (Isaac 2010a and 2010b; Belhassen 2009). These studies concluded that since 2000, improving tourism at these sites have been at the forefront of the management agenda, and have been a direct response to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict during which time many historical sites had been damaged; to quote Rami Isaac, 'great damage had occurred at Bethlehem and Hebron'' (Isaac 2010b: 580).

The historic city of Jerusalem is unfortunately not one of the better managed historic sites; it suffers from the problems endemic at many other large cities, overcrowding and over consumption have led to sites being pushed to their limits. Kobi Cohen Hattab examined Jerusalem in a case study and the impact of tourism; his findings draw many parallels with Cairo. The main problem he concludes is that of severe overcrowding, particularly at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre (the most Holy of Sites to many Orthodox, Catholic and Armenian Christians; Cohen Hattab 2013: 327), with any increase in the visitor amounts amounting to extreme damage to the church (Cohen Hattab 2013: 327). The city also had many problems such as slum areas and a lack of decent housing, particularly in the Muslim quarter (Cohen Hattab 2013: 329) and a system of inadequate through fare roads which limit the amount of travel one can make by road (Cohen Hattab 2013: 328). In response to these issues, a management body was created in 2002 called PIRT, it was an amalgamation of organisations, associations, public bodies and governments (Isaac 2010b: 586) to try and deal with some of these inherent problems. The improvement at these Holy sites has focused upon improving the infrastructure, focusing on conservation and

increasing interpretation.

Other Biblical sites have been managed more successfully than others, the case study of the Baptismal site of Jesus Christ in esh-Shuneh South, on the eastern side of the river Jordan illustrates how heritage sites can be well maintained and be responsible to the local population. It was declared a heritage site in 2000, and since then has become a stopping point for those on pilgrimage from Jerusalem (Mustafa 2014: 76) and other sites mentioned in the old and new testament. Mustafa reports that in 2010 it had over 160,673 international visitors (Mustafa 2014: 77), indicating that while not reaching the mass tourism levels of Jerusalem it does have substantial levels of tourists visiting each year. The Jordanian government have taken a very proactive and excellent approach to conserving the authenticity of the heritage site and employing local villagers. A specialised team of local residents were trained in conservation techniques of archaeological remains and were hired to construct and look after amenities (Mustafa 2014: 78). In addition, a forward-thinking approach was taken to the display of ancient ruins, mosaics and other sensitive areas using wood bridges, rope fencing, trails and a wooden floor resting over the mosaics (Mustafa 2014:79). Here is an excellent example of a well-managed, heritage and pilgrimage site. Mustafa does not examine the motivations of tourists to esh-Shuneh South, but it can be safely assumed that there is a mixture of those visiting on pilgrimage and those who are heritage tourists only interested in the history and archaeology of the site.

The preceding section indicates that within the wider global context, the motivations for heritage tourism are quite diverse; some have an emotional attachment, some travel for a pilgrimage, whether it is personal or in a group setting, while others travel to just enjoy the history or architecture of a place. These are the motivations of visitors coming to Christian heritage sites across Egypt and clear, effective management of tourists is needed to ensure a positive experience for these visitors and pilgrims; previous examples have shown that Christian heritage sites can be managed effectively and efficiently, but it is also very clear that not all Christian sites in the global scheme are well managed. It is imperative that Coptic heritage sites in Egypt buck this trend of poorly managed touristic heritage sites and to facilitate this, an examination into Egyptian heritage as a whole is required.

5.4 Egyptian Tourism

In the previous section, we discussed heritage tourism within a global framework and in particular heritage tourism and the motivations of these tourists to these sites. We must now examine the role heritage tourism plays in travel to Egypt as a whole, what problems are present within Egypt and how these affect Christian monuments. The first tourists to Egypt arrived in the 16th-century; explorer Lawrence Aldersey journeyed to Egypt in 1586-7, visiting the Pyramids at Giza and the ruins at Memphis. He was followed by John Evesham (1588), John Sanderson (1585-1587) and William Lithgow (1612) (Wortham 1971). The 17th-century saw many more travellers to Egypt and a general increase in interest in Orientalism. John Wortham suggests that the beginning of the 'gentleman traveller' began with George Sandys who travelled along the Nile, explored the pyramids and subsequentally published his travels which became very popular (Wortham 1971: 18). The 18th-century saw explorers such as Richard Pococke (1737-8) visit the Pyramids, Saqqara and Dashur and then cruise along the Nile to Esna and Aswan (Wortham 1971: 28). The great influx of archaeologists after Napoleon's expedition in 1798-1800 has already been documented in chapter 2 but it was not until the early 20th-century that tour operators began to operate on a larger scale. By the 1930's, 'P and O' tour operators offered cruises to Egypt in the late 19th-century and Thomas Cook provided tourists with a Nile cruise from Cairo to Halfa on a Nile Steamer (Jones 2008a: 100). This was the beginning of what modern people would recognise as 'tourism'. After the revolution in 1952, tourism fluctuated (Gray 1998: 93), but during the 1950's and 1960's, the government focused its efforts to promote its vast array of heritage sites to the western audience (Hazbun 2010: 227), and this is still the primary focus of its promotion of tourism today. Indeed, this promotion has worked; a survey by Seyhmus Baloglu and Mehmet Mangaloglu showed that historic sites and heritage were the ideas most associated with Egypt (Baloglu and Mangaloglu 2001: 6).

Tourism to Arab countries is currently relatively small in the global picture with it only providing 2-3% of world tourism (Berriane 1999: 11); it however, contains a large share of the worlds antiquities, with one sixth of the world's antiquities to be found in Egypt (Ebeid 2008: 145) with tourism generating three million jobs in 2015 (WTTC 2015: 4). Historically Egyptian tourism has traded upon its Pharaonic heritage, with its most well-known sites such as the Pyramids providing the iconic picture for its marketing pamphlets. As such, Egypt spent $15 million dollars (£10,264,500) on

tourism related activities such as promotion in 2015 (WTTC 205: 11). Before the 2011 uprising, Egypt attracted 3 million tourists each year and took 2.2 billion dollars per year in revenues (McManamon and Rogers 1994: 18); in 2005 alone Egypt made 6.4 Billion US dollars in revenue (Jones 2008a: 104). Further data suggests that 1.25 million tourists would visit the Pyramids at Giza each year (Evans and Fielding 2000: 83). The official figures for tourism compiled by the government show that international tourism hit its peak in 2008 when 12,835,000 tourists visited Egypt, the civil unrest led to a dramatic drop in tourism with an all-time low in 2011 with 9,845,000 visitors (Capmas.gov 2016). Currently, there is a huge decline in visitors since the terrorist atrocities in late 2015 (The Guardian 2016a) with only 347, 000 tourists travelling to Egypt in January 2016 (Trading Economics 2016).

Ever since the first Nile cruises in the 1930's, tourists have wanted to experience and visit the temples and monuments of the ancient Pharaohs and in this respect Egypt has marketed its most popular attractions over the past seventy years. It has been remarked by other scholars that its archaeological heritage has always been centred upon the 'circuit' of the Pyramids of Giza, El Menia, Luxor, Aswan and Abu Simbel (Helmy and Cooper 2002: 518). Eman Helmy and Chris Cooper are not the only scholars to note that Pharaonic heritage receives the lion's share of marketing and funding, in her assessment of the monuments in Islamic Cairo, Caroline Williams discussed the 'problem' of pharaonic tourism, noting it receives almost all official money and energy to maintain and conserve the monuments of Ancient Egypt. In 1992 £LE79 million pounds was allocated to preservation of historic monuments and only LE£9 million was spent on non-Pharaonic sites and monuments (Williams 2001/2: 595). Indeed, the official government tourism website promotes both relaxation destinations such as Hugurda and the Pharaonic heritage destinations of Luxor and Cairo (Egypt Travel 2016).

The bias towards marketing Ancient Egypt is visible and obvious on the websites of tour operators, and as these sites are often one of the first stops a tourist will make when deciding upon which historic sites to travel to, they can have an influential affect upon the visitor; these tour operators operate as image creators (Baloglu and Mangaloglu 2001: 2) and as such can control where the lion’s share of visitors will travel to. Many specialist tour companies offer cruises and package tours along the Nile, and longer vacations at many of the tour resorts in Sharm-El-Sheik and

Hugurda; most offer both beach holidays where there is no heritage component or others which focus exclusively upon visiting the vast amount of Pharaonic heritage sites in Egypt. The front web page of Audley Travel (2016b), Spa Travel (2016) and Egypt Tours (2016) all display images of Pharaonic heritage over Islamic and Christian. The types of tour on offer also prove there is a definite pharaonic bias, Audley Travel offers bespoke tours to the Middle East. Their Historic Cruise from Cairo to Aswan travel package offers a cruise to visit all of the sites along the Nile. All of the stops on the itinerary focus on visiting the Pyramids, Tel El Amarna and Luxor, with one visit to the Red and White Monasteries at Sohag (Audley Travel 2016a). Similarly, their 'Cairo and the Treasures of the Nile Tour' focuses upon visiting the Valley of the Kings in Luxor, Edfu and Philae (Audley Travel 2016b). Other tour companies are similar in their sales pitch, Bales Worldwide offer a Nile cruise which stops at all of the Pharaonic heritage attractions, while Andante Tours offers a Graeco-Roman package which examines the Greek and Roman sites over the Ancient Egyptian temples and monuments. The level of Pharaonic-centric bias is even visible at the resort complexes which tourists reside at as part of the package tour such as Sharm-el-Sheik, with the style of the buildings presented as a faux-Pharaonic temple (Steiner 2010: 246); the tourist really is aggressively pushed this pharaonic-centric idea of Egyptian tourism from many angles.

It is clear from these tour operator websites that Ancient Egypt is the historical period which is aggressively marketed by both the Egyptian government and the tour operators who sell the heritage tours. Although there is a clear bias towards marketing pharaonic and relaxation holidays, Islamic, and more importantly to this study, Christian heritage sites are advertised, although on a very limited basis and since the early 1990's, Egypt has attempted to diversify its portfolio (Steiner 2010: 242). The trend of purely marketing Pharaonic heritage sites is slowly but surely abating; Caroline Williams believes foreign tourist are slowly realising there is Egyptian cultural heritage extends past the Sphinx and Pharaohs, with Islam and Christianity being highlighted by the government (Williams 2002: 457-8). The Egyptian Tourism Board does have a page dedicated to Coptic Egypt which displays a range of churches and monasteries tourists may visit (Egypt Travel 2016); other tour companies do offer limited guided tours, for example Audley Travel offer (Audley travel 2016) a stop at the Red and White Monastery in Sohag, and Viator offer a visit the churches of old Cairo (Viator 2016). Visits to the churches of Old Cairo are relatively limited, Expat Explore's Egypt Explorer

tour allows visitors to browse Old Cairo, as does Andante's 'Bare Bones' tour which allows for a day in Old Cairo. It is unsurprising that Egypt markets its pharaonic heritage and its warm, sunny climate, these are clearly very popular and pull in millions of visitors every year. Although Christian heritage is not marketed as heavily, it is still marketed by the government and there are a few tour companies that offer limited trips to historic churches and monasteries, albeit as part of a Nile cruise or an 'explorer' package.

It has been established that there are visitors and guided tours available to Christian heritage sites in Egypt, and although they are not visited to the levels of pharaonic or Graeco-Roman sites, they are still visited nonetheless. Data suggests that 23% of travellers to Egypt also wish to visit heritage sites (Berriane 1999:14), there is unfortunately no breakdown in what type of heritage experience they wish to consume, but the heavy marketing of Ancient Egypt by tour operators would suggest many tourists wish to visit the monuments of Ancient Egypt. This is an important point to make, that although visitor numbers to Coptic sites are much lower than those to Pharaonic, there is still an interest which forms a small part of a tourist itinerary. As such the motivations to travel to Egypt and specifically Chrisitan sites should be discussed.

Those who travel to Egypt can be categorised broadly as either those on a package tour where hotel, flights and excursions are pre-booked; and those who are on a 'niche tour' (those with an open airline ticket and nothing pre-arranged). Many tourists come for the hot weather and sunny beaches that Egypt have to offer as previously discussed. Beach tourism is a powerful motivation for travelling to Egypt and is currently growing (Rashed and Hanafi 2004: 3), the main draw for many tourists was -and still is- a warm climate and sandy beaches (Timothy and Nypaune 2009: 7); the visitors who wish to sunbathe and enjoy the sea will be staying at one of the 'typical' resorts at Hugurda or el Ansh (Berriane 1999: 16). The Red Sea resorts in particular have been described as ‘low-yield’ where, those travelling here attracted by big discounts (Shackley 1999: 543). Those staying at these resorts are likely to either have little knowledge of Coptic heritage sites, instead wishing to experience what Timothy Edensor calls the ‘Enclavic experience’ (Edensor 1998: 51), staying in a safe area and sunbathing.

Tour operators do offer tour bus trips to some of the nearby monasteries and some tourists will opt to take a day trip to visit these sites; it likely they will have limited to no prior knowledge of these heritage sites before visiting. Another aspect of the pre-booked tour is that of the Nile cruise. Nile cruises are marketed at these people (Berriane 1999: 16), where they can travel along the Nile at a leisurely pace and stop off at all of the major pharaonic sites and travel into Cairo on day trips. These are highly organised tours which allow a few days for personal discovery of sites; a prime example of this is the Thompson Nile Legacy tour (Thompson 2016). Both of these types of tourist are likely to have little or a passing interest of heritage sites, perhaps interested in seeing an awe-inspiring ancient monument or a Christian heritage site if offered on an organised tour. It is arguable that there cannot be any deeper spiritual connection to these monuments aside from the draw from wanting to visit a monument piece of architecture or to study a dead culture; it is unlikely these visitors will have any emotional draw to Christian sites also. Unfortunately, there is no data on the number of visitors to Coptic heritage sites in Egypt, the amount visiting Christian sites cannot be determined and no prior study has broken down the amounts of visitor to periods of site, yet it can be assumed safely based upon the sheer ratio of Pharaonic heritage marketing that Coptic sites are visited, but not to the levels of Pharaonic monuments; they form a very small part of the tourist itinerary.

The second type of visitors to Coptic heritage sites are those on a pilgrimage, whether this is in a group or as a lone venture. Many Coptic sites hold an allure to western Copts who would wish to visit the ancient churches of Cairo or the birth place of modern monasticism in the Nitria and Scetis area. Many denominations of Christian have ties to the Coptic church, including the Orthodox churches of Ethiopia, Eritria, Libya, and much of Africa who recognise the See of Alexandria. In addition, there are Coptic Orthodox churches across the world, including Britain, US, France, Canada and Australia. There are millions of Christians potentially able and willing to perform a pilgrimage to visit their spiritual homeland. The idea of travel to a spiritual homeland was examined in more detail in section 5.3 in Stephenson and Cole's work and it was concluded it is a powerful motivator to travel. It is likely that many on pilgrimage will be drawn to the monastic sites of Egypt to fulfil an emotional need, much like the Evangelical Christians documented in Yaniv Behassen's study of Evangelical Pilgrimage (2009). The pull of visiting these emotionally charged sites would be a significant factor in wanting to visit Egypt; for example, the cave church of a saint or the location where

Jesus is said to have stopped at may be enough of an emotional trigger to these pilgrims.

Country	Amount of Coptic Christians
United Kingdom	20,000
USA	700,000-1 Million
Canada	50,000

Table 5.1: Coptic populations in three western Anglophone countries.

As discussed earlier, many Christians have travelled across the Middle East to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and have travelled to sites mentioned in the Bible (Belhassen 2009:135), with this in mind the Mubarak government started a Holy Family Tour rejuvenation project to restore all of the churches linked to where the Holy Family were purported to have visited during their flight from Herod in the late 1990's. The tour is over nine days and starts at Tal Basta, then travels to the churches around Cairo, then to the Old churches of Cairo and then to the Wadi Natrun, Minya, and Assyut (Egypt Uncovered 2016). This tour is offered by Memphis tours (2016b) and would be taken by a group of either like-minded individuals or perhaps a group from a church which has been organised to visit these sites, much like the Evangelical Christians in the US.

Other visitors who are not part of an organised tour may not be on a pilgrimage but rather have come to enjoy the culture, religion and architecture of some of the Christian sites. These tourists have not come specifically on a personal journey, but have instead visited to see the religious element of Egypt's long history; they may not be religious themselves. Tourists such as these are just as likely to be lone travellers as opposed to a large tour group. Not all visitors to Coptic churches are interested in the religious aspect, it is likely that many Coptic churches and monasteries will be visited through coach tours, particularly around the Red Sea Coast area, there will be a mix of those interested in the art, history and architecture, but some of the visitors will have very little desire often to engage with the local community, nor does the history and culture hold any deeper meaning to them other than it being a historical building; they feel no affinity to the culture. The blame could be levelled at the way tour groups are managed; we may once again use Timothy Edensor 'enclavic' theory (Edensor 1998: 51) to quantify this idea of the visitors being

herded from one site to another, not really engaging with the subject material.

In summary, there are three types of visitors to Christian heritage sites in Egypt, those with very little experience of Coptic heritage, who are part of an organised tour group, but are fundamentally on holiday for the warm climate and beaches. These visitors will still enjoy viewing a Christian heritage site, but there is no further emotional attachment, they would enjoy the architecture, atmosphere and general history. The second type of tourist are those who may have an emotional attachment to these sites; these types of tourist are more likely to visit on their own volition and not as part of a heritage tour. The last group are tourists who have travelled to view and enjoy the architecture, history and culture, these visitors are equally likely to be part of an organised tour and to travel on their own.

5.6 Managment and Interpretation at Christian Heritage Sites in Egypt

The previous sections of this chapter has explored the motivations, and problems that face not only heritage sites in Egypt, but those across the world; it has given us a truly global perspective of how tourism interacts with cultural heritage sites. Christian heritage sites in Egypt are no less susceptible to the ravages of modern tourism and therefore require robust management to curtail and minimise the latent problems that mass tourism has created. The first impact that needs to be addressed is mass tourism. Mass tourism and the problems it causes have been the subject of debate for many years; problems caused by mass tourism were top of the agenda for then head of the Supreme Council of Antiquities Director Zawi Hawass at the 2002 Egyptology Conference. His speech began with a firm resolve to protect Egypt's antiquities from the ravages of tourism which was started during his time at the UNESCO conference in Milan in 1996 (Hawass 2003: 48). Indeed, mass tourism and its negative impacts upon heritage sites is well known to scholars and those in power, and has been well documented in the past (Hawass 2003: 50). A re-evaluation of mass tourism and its effects upon the local population and its environment has led to it becoming the pariah of the tourism industry, with it being blamed for grossly overusing sites by ICOMOS (Bumbaru, Burke and Petzet 2000: 10) and 'consuming' them at a vast rate (Mowforth and Munt 1998: 16), with tour group after tour group slowly eroding the site, buying local wares at low prices and exploiting the local population. For this reason, niche tourism in Egypt (and more widely across the Middle East) has increased in recent

years (Hazbun 2010: 230).

While many countries have a niche market to promote and advertise such as water sports or trekking in Australia or New Zealand and mountain trekking in Nepal, Egypt has actively promoted its vast array of heritage sites, many websites depict the treasures of the Pharaohs ready to be found by inquisitive travellers, yet as Michael Jones has reiterated, Egypt has pursued mass heritage tourism over the far more manageable niche heritage tourism in the past (Jones 2008a: 104). Michael Jones is not the only scholar to remark on this; ICOMOS reported as far back as 2000 that mass tourism was overburdening sites in Egypt (Bumbaru, Burke, Petzet et al 2000: 10). In the past sixteen years since their judgement, tourism to many pharaonic sites has increased and this tactic has worked very well with the well-publicised pharaonic sites visited in their millions; prior to the uprising in 2011, the Valley of the Kings in Luxor was visited by between 4-5000 people per day (Hawass 2003: 48), and Tutankhamun's tomb alone had 5000 visitors people per day (Hawass 2003: 49). Therefore, there was a huge demand for consumers wanting to visit these heritage sites, but as shown in the preceding section, Christian and Islamic sites have been promoted less than those of pharaonic origin.

Christian sites in Egypt should be divided into two types, urban and rural; urban sites would encompass the churches of Cairo and Alexandria while rural would contain the monasteries of the desert. The two types of site are visited by different amounts of tourists, and therefore require different management plans. Cairo, before the revolution, was overloaded with tourists (Evans 1998: 179), ICOMOS placed the historic city centre within the extreme danger category (Bumbaru, Burke, Petzet et al 2000: 95), yet Katie Evans concluded (through personal observation) in her assessment of tourism in Cairo, that the district of Old Cairo, where many of the historic churches and mosques are situated, were not visited regularly (Evans 1998: 182). Obviously, the churches of Cairo are not to be visited by the extreme levels of the Pyramids at Giza, yet we know that tourists do visit these sites, albeit in smaller numbers. The Nile cruises, and the organised tours offered by Adante Travel and other Niche tour companies allow visitors free time to peruse the old historic quarter, there are no organised tour groups visiting these sites but there are lone visitors or small groups; it would therefore seem that mass tourism does not affect the churches in quite the same manner as the pharaonic. Indeed, this is true, there is not the same level of

abrasion occurring which is wearing down the fabric of the churches, but the degradation still occurs, albeit at a slower rate, so management should allow for mitigation strategies such as barriers over sensitive and historic wood panels, and signs informing tourists of the delicate nature of the churches.

Careful control and management of both tourist and site is crucial to limit the amount of erosion, and is the first step by many heritage managers to curb and minimise damage to a site. The quickest way to allow a site to degrade is to allow unfettered access to all areas. Physical wear and tear by the visitor is often the 'silent killer' of a heritage site and the effects can be very slow to be seen and accumulate over time. It is a problem cited in previous studies (Timothy and Nyaupane 2009: 57); one visitor rubbing their hand over a statue will cause no visible harm, a million hands rubbing this same statue over the course of a year will cause significant visible erosion to this artefact. Cumulative rubbing of an object can remove fine detail, cause the object to become smooth or in extreme circumstances break off pieces, this has occurred at significant sites such as Stonehenge (Timothy and Nyaupane 2009: 58).

The key aspects of a Copt-centred management plan must focus upon minimising negative tourist effects upon a site, the tenet of reducing mass tourism to a manageable level is a positive one that should be applied at Christian sites also. The primary action should be to reduce mass tourism and limit the amount of visitors (Leblanc 2003; Mayer 2003: 70) to the site or an area of the site. This has occurred at the Valley of the Kings and the Pyramids, where occasionally it was required to issue limited amounts of tickets per day (Rivers 2000: 178; Jones 2008a: 105) to keep the level of abrasion down and damage caused from the moisture in visitor’s breath; Michael Jones is not the only scholar who advocated this kind of restrictions. Jonathan Tokley would like to see a 'ritual of sanctity' enacted upon sites such as certain tomb at the Valley of the Kings; he describes the use of wearing slippers, limited tickets and a world class price for the ticket to really emphasise the importance and fragility of the heritage (Tokley 2006:258).

While limiting the amount of tourists per day to a particularly sensitive area of the site, the real issue is the training of managers and those who can assess the site on an hour by hour basis; there is a need for staff to assess the 'load' of a site and any potential impacts the visitors may occur (Helmy and Cooper 2008: 189). This issue of a

lack of trained staff and managers has been previously cited by Kent Weeks who noted the urgent need for more training of managers and for a long term strategy from the MOA (previously SCA) (Weeks 2003: 71). In some circumstances this has been addressed with the training of MOA/SCA inspectors on the Kafr Dawood training site run by Geoffrey Tassie and Fekri Hassan in conjunction with UNESCO (Tassie 2007: 1776), but there is still a huge deficit in the training of managing heritage sites.

Limiting visitors is obviously going to have the effect of reducing abrasion and 'wear and tear' of the most fragile areas of site. It is important at many of the Christian monasteries to monitor and in some cases limit visitor amounts. The Red Sea Monasteries of St Paul and St Antony have delicate medieval wall paintings which have recently been restored; they are very delicate and would be damaged by visitors touching them or taking pictures with the flash on. The limiting of visitors at Christian churches and monasteries would be an effective way to limit damage, the churches of Old Cairo do not realistically have the amounts of tourists associated with Luxor or Giza, but the Red Sea monasteries and the World Heritage Site of Abu Mina do garner a reasonably large amount of visitors who do need to be controlled. The smaller churches are unlikely to need restrictions on the amount of tourists at any one time. Therefore, in some cases physically limiting the ability to touch should be considered, this has been enacted previously at the tomb of Nakht (amongst others) at the Valley of the Kings, where a plastic sheet was mounted in front of the wall carvings, preventing touching (Tokeley 2006: 262).

The use of barriers obviously detracts from the experience but in some cases it may be warranted. Current scholarly thought which relates to obstructing the heritage suggests an unecombured view is best. Sullivan and Pearson's work has shown an unobstructed view to the monument is effective but only if people are not too numerous to block the view (Sullivan and Pearson 1995; 285, 303). Gianna Moscardo's report supports this theory by stating a slight obstruction causes viewers to spend less time on it as they get bored of it (2002: 285). Physical prevention is the obvious way of controlling how a visitor acts, what they touch and (most importantly from a heritage conservation perspective), what they do not touch. It is not the only method that can be utilised; prevention of erosion using cordons and physical barriers are the least imaginative way of controlling visitors, and potentially a short term solution to a long term problem (Carter and Grimwade 2007: 110). Unfortunately, they are occasionally

required to prevent souvenir hunters who break parts off objects (Timothy and Boyd 2003: 128) and tourists often take mementos and carve their name (Timothy and Nypaune 2009: 57); this has occurred not only at the 'nice' heritage sites of the Pyramids or Stonehenge, but also at Auschwitz where pieces of stone have been removed as a memento (Coles 2013: 107).

The author believes that the use of physical barriers should only be a last resort and education, informative signs and interpretation should negate the need for intrusive barriers at Christian sites, it must be remembered that these buildings are not solely tourist attractions, they are in use by local Christians and clergy. Niall Finneran proposes the use of signs around the sites to inform visitors that these churches and monasteries are in use and they should be mindful and respectful of the host culture (Finneran 2009: 9); this is an excellent idea and one that should be employed at both larger monasteries such as Abu Mina, the monastery of St Antony, and the smaller churches of Cairo. Indeed, the education of the public is of paramount importance (Hawass 2003: 52), as is the use of signs to inform and instruct (Helmy and Cooper 2008: 199)

Although the volume of tourists is one of the biggest threats to Coptic churches and monasteries, the lack of a cohesive governmental plan (as previously discussed in chapter 2), nor any legislation relating conservation to tourism makes enforcing any kind of management plan difficult, and really compounds the issues caused by mass tourism. Eman Helmy and Chris Cooper have previously noted that there is no sub-policy linking tourism to a strategy of conservation (Helmy and Cooper 2008: 191). One of the problems associated with controlling mass tourism within Egypt, is the lack of governmental control and in particular, the lack of co-operation between the ministries (Sedky 2005:11) which results in a slow reaction to any problems relating to the damage of heritage sites or tourism. Indeed, Ahmed Sedky succinctly notes that the *awaqf* is not on the supreme council of tourism (Sedky 2005: 6), this indicates that tourism and religious buildings are yet to have a channel to discuss issues directly relating to heritage tourism at both Christian and Islamic heritage sites.

As discussed in chapter 2, the division of responsibilities between each department and ministry has created problems in the day to day running of heritage sites and has in some cases restricted the Department of Antiquities ability to protect

heritage tourism sites; the charge of inconsistent policies has been levelled by Saleh Lamei (2009: 125), who believes this is a considerable problem in the running and protection of heritage sites. Other Scholars have noted the high level of bureaucracy within the government departments (Williams 2001/2: 594); Caroline Williams encapsulates the problems of the departments not working together; she uses the example of the Ministry of Awaqf allowing pilgrims to sleep and live in historic monuments, while the MOA are powerless to prevent this from occurring or to forcibly evict them (Williams 2001/2: 595). This lack of co-ordination is a real problem for Christian church sites in Cairo, where often there are problems with conservation and there is no clear mechanism for inter-department discussions on how to deal with these issues. The lack of co-ordination has led to what Ahmed Sedky describes as a 'mosaic of zones of control'; in effect Cairo has been carved up under the direct governance of the Ministry of Culture, MOA and the Ministry of Tourism (Sedky 2005: 12). Clearly with this patchwork of control there is no overarching policy on how to look after historic sites and none for Coptic sites. Zawi Hawass has called for more co-operation between the government and the tourism agencies (Hawass 2003: 52); previous examples prove there needs to be a formal mechanism to enable the two agencies to work together and solve problems (Jones 2008a:107; Abada 2008: 94).

So it is clear that with a complete lack of formal co-operation between Egyptian governmental departments, it falls to the heritage site manager to protect the historic fabric. One of the least instrusive ways this can be implemented is via clear, concise interpretation that can be hugely helpful in reducing negative impacts by visitors. Previous studies have concluded that interpretation at a heritage site is of utmost importance; ICOMOS hold signs to be an important part of the heritage experience (1993: 73). The mantra touted is a clearer and more informative heritage site, the better the experience for the visitor. Other scholars have advocated their approval for using excellent signage in previous papers; (Bramwell and Lane 2007: 60; Riddle 1994: 259) and others have cited their usefulness in supporting and enhancing conservation needs (West and McKellar 2010: 179). It is obvious from these papers that clear interpretation of a site is an important part of a visit, whether it is an information board, or signs letting the visitor know where other areas of the site. The differing types of visitor such as those on pilgrimage and those on a package tour also need to be catered for, by offering differing levels of interpretation. This has implications for Coptic sites in Egypt too; this is not the sort of heritage that the visitor

to Egypt expects to encounter, and as such it requires nuanced yet accessible interpretation.

A number of surveys have been conducted to determine whether signs are actually important to visitors or not. A study held at Caerphilly Castle in Wales indicated that 96% of respondents said they thought the well laid out and simple signs improved the tour (Light 2007: 257). A similar survey at Stonehenge had 80% of users saying signs were good and well presented (Mason and Kuo 2006: 183). Both surveys had a high percentage of tourists who believed signs were very important in creating a more pleasant experience. An example to the contrary, where no signs are used at all is via Myra Shackley's recording of visitor experiences at the Citadel in Damascus, Syria. To put it into context, there are no signs or information boards at any part of the site, no interpretive boards for foreign visitors and a map in Arabic (Shackley 1998: 113). Myra Shackley recorded unhappy feelings from interviewees about the site from tourists who have no idea what they are looking at or what period it is from. The lack of interpretation garners clear negative reactions from visitors; these people do not feel engaged with the site, nor do they know what they are actually looking at during the tour. It must be noted that it is not only Syria where this poor signage problem occurs, in Egypt the problem is equally as bad, until recently there were very few signs at the Pyramids of Giza (Evans and Fielding 2000: 87), perhaps their most iconic heritage monuments. This is not true at all sites in Egypt however, the Museum at Saqqara has signs in English, French and Arabic (Fushiya and de Trafford 2009: 43).

The imparting of information is very important, as previously noted in chapter 4, if we have altered the site we must let visitors know why and if there is an object or part of the building which may hold significance to the Coptic community then this information must be presented. This is important as it tells them why they should not touch an object rather than telling them to stay away. An excellent global example comes from Uluru (Ayers Rock) in Australia. It is sacred to the aboriginal natives, so mesh and Perspex have been used to protect it from wear and tear, and accompanying this is a sign informing the public why they are not to touch the rock. It provides a good example of signage put to good effect (Sullivan and Pearson 1995: 303-4) to inform and educate the public. By imparting this information and making this connection with the visitor, however slight, we increase our chance of creating a mindful atmosphere (Timothy and Boyd 2003: 177). As many Coptic heritage sites are still in daily use,

creating a mindful and respectful atmosphere is paramount, any perceived disruption to their daily lives or disrespect to their culture could have disastrous effects. The majority of scholars do not approach the use of appropriate signs from the perspective of heritage preservation, rather their view is of keeping the tourist in good spirits and improving their enjoyment of a site, but well thought out and informative signs can also help to maintain the standards of the site. The two main theories which pertain to interpretation and signage are John Urry's 'Gaze' and Gianna Moscardo's 'Mindfullness'. Both of these important ideologies hold that by creating the right type of atmosphere at a heritage site, we can better control how a visitor behaves and thus minimise any negative impacts, whether they are litter or physical damage.

John Urry's basic theory is that what the tourist looks at is the most important part of a site; all other services are periphery (Urry 2006: 42) his work built upon Dean MacCannell's seminal work on authenticity. His principal theory that the visitor decides what is significant and not those who run or own the site has been supported by other scholars such as Phaedra Pezzulo who noted the visitor chooses what to look at and point out to friends during a tour (2007: 40), but she is also wary that in tourism the tourist is too often just reduced to eyeball without a body (2007: 28), laying claim that there are more to tourists than what they look at. Indeed, it may be surmised that this question is underdeveloped as a whole except for Urry's work (Chaney 2008: 196).

Running parallel to Urry's gaze is Gianna Moscardo's 'Mindfulness', it is the theory that if a visitor is entertained and kept engaged they will have a more fulfilling experience (Timothy and Boyd 2003: 166) and will be less inclined to carelessly damage the site. It has been actively and widely employed at heritage destinations, whether or not the owners are aware of it or not (Mcintosh 2007: 138). This is an important theory to utilise at Christian sites in Egypt as it will have the effect of reducing malicious damage, can educate the public and increase their enjoyment of the site. Other scholars have supported this theory (Mcintosh 2007: 253; Timothy and Boyd 2003: 177) and called for this kind of approach to be employed at all heritage sites. Hall and Page in particular refer to the heritage site as 'non-passive' (Hall and Page 1999: 80), essentially supporting Moscardo's theory that more interaction must occur on sites. This interaction can take a variety of forms such as video presentations, photos, re-enactments and animated reconstructions of traditional life (Seeden 1990: 145); all of these are capable of making a connection with the viewer (Timothy and Boyd 2003:

77). Moscardo's work is supported by David Uzzell's work from the University of Surrey whose data that suggests visitors are most attracted by animated interpretation (1994: 295). Some of these approaches may be applicable in varied ways to Coptic heritage.

Moscardo's work reminds us that when a variety of stimuli on site is available then it creates the atmosphere to allow the visitor to be more mindful of their surroundings and therefore more careful and respectful, she does note that too much information can have a negative effect and can overload the visitor (2002; 289). This is an important point to make, Christian Coptic sites can often have a multitude of different periods of architecture and salient features such as relics. It is important that visitors know who these icons and frescoes are depicting and to gain a general history of the site or church. These signs and description boards are needed to inform visitors what they are looking at (Bramwell and Lane 2007: 58) and in some cases why it is significant to the Copts. Their use must be balanced and not too intrusive, Myra Shackley has noted in her previous work that all too often are signs visually intrusive and not simple enough (Shackley 2000: 7), of course they cannot be too simplistic and need to convey the right amount of information; previous work has noted the dichotomy of requiring simplistic signs and more in depth analysis (Bramwell and Lane 2007: 58). The lack of what Edensor calls 'signifiers' (Edensor 1998: 52), equates to tourists vaguely walking around the site not knowing what are the most significant and important parts are. It is likely that the Sphinx does not need a sign to tell visitors what it is as it has been burned into social consciousness via the media, yet the bones of a saint within a Coptic church will not be quite as well known; without a marker identifying what it is and why it is special it is just an object and has no meaning. (MacCannell 1999: 128).

It can be concluded from these studies and theories that clear signage and interpretation at Coptic heritage sites is paramount if the visitor is to have a positive experience. This is particularly important at many Christian sites as the material culture they will be viewing may be rather obscure or difficult to interpret. By engaging the visitor and creating a mindful atmosphere, they are more likely to engage with the site, its message and be less destructive in their usage (such as not dropping litter). Signs can be used to draw the visitors gaze at the site and really provide a way for the site managers at these sites to draw the tourist to the interesting, informative and what the the Copts believe to be the most valuable and significant areas of the site.

5.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, case studies drawn from an analysis of Egypt's pharaonic sites have offered a number of ways to manage and maintain Christian tourist sites. Each site should be viewed on its own terms and merits and a competent management plan should address this; clearly the larger Red Sea Monasteries have different visitor amounts and problems to the smaller churches of Cairo; the management plan should reflect this. The overarching theme that has become apparent is the view that tourism when unchecked is bad for tourist sites and the host community; often this means that mass tourism is perceived to be the 'bad guy' of heritage tourism. Before the new visitor centres at the Pyramids of Giza and at Karnak, Luxor were built recently, there had been a real, noticeable problem with abrasion of the reliefs, the masonry was accumulating salt efflorescence due to the humidity in the tombs and there was a general lack of monitoring or checks and balances. The new management plans at both of these mass tourist sites has encouragingly minimised the damage with careful use of plastic barriers which stop visitors touching the stonework, limiting tombs and the pyramids to a set amount of people per day and installing a temperature and humidity sensor into the tombs. Following some sensible rules, and by enforcing a monitoring scheme means tourist heritage sites can welcome vast amounts of tourists. The idea that mass tourists are the only visitors who can cause damage is of course nebulous to say the least; trekkers and backpackers can cause just as much damage as those in a group. It is too over simplistic to say mass tourists are bad and lone backpackers are good, this is not the case. What has been established is that high levels of tourists if unchecked can cause irreparable damage; it should therefore be controlled at all Christian sites.

Christian heritage has not been marketed well in Egypt or in the West and has not reached levels of pharaonic visitors, but there are tour companies that do offer limited trips to visit these sites. In addition, there are tours sold that offer the chance to visit Coptic sites as a smaller part of the larger itinerary. As discussed, while there will be visitors who have no interest in Christian heritage and may enjoy other aspects of the tour such as the architecture, Coptic sites will invariably attract pious pilgrims from across the globe wishing to visit their holiest sites; the dichotomy of visitors therefore makes it of paramount importance to allow for adequate interpretation of all sites. Both the religiously involved and the layperson need sufficient information,

whether they be pamphlets, or signs to make their visit enjoyable. We have explored the motivations of visitors to these heritage sites, the problems they may face and the management problems; now we look forward to the first case study: Haret Zuwaila.

Chapter 6 – A Case Study of Coptic monuments in Urban Cairo: The Churches of al Adra and Abu Sefain (Haret Zuwaila Complex)

6. 1 Introduction

In this chapter I will consider two historic Christian monuments in an urban setting: The Islamic district of Cairo, an environment which presents its own special issues and concerns regarding the preservation and management of historic buildings. Cairo is home to very few historic Christian churches, and those which have survived are almost exclusively situated within the walls of the Roman fortress of Babylon, known as 'Old Cairo'. The boundaries of Old Cairo are demarcated by the walls of the Roman fortress of Babylon. Unlike Alexandria, which had been occupied since its creation by Ptolemy I (367-283BC) in c. 331BC, Cairo was settled and built initially by the first Islamic invaders in AD641 and extended by Islamic ruling dynasties in the subsequent centuries. It is currently 453 square miles in size and is home to over 16 million inhabitants (Kielty 2008: 202). Described recently by one commentator as a 'millennial model of entropy' with dilapidated looks (Golia 2004: 14); this is a fair assessment. The city is a mixture of a maze of medieval winding streets and new large overpasses, designed to bring the city into the 21st-century (Pers. Obs). Unfortunately, much of the city is dishevelled and dirty, with a high level of pollution killing between 15-20,000 residents every year (Golia 2004: 40). Overpopulation and an endemic housing crisis adds to the social pressures within the city and often spills out onto the streets, with illegal shanty towns popping up across many historic sites.

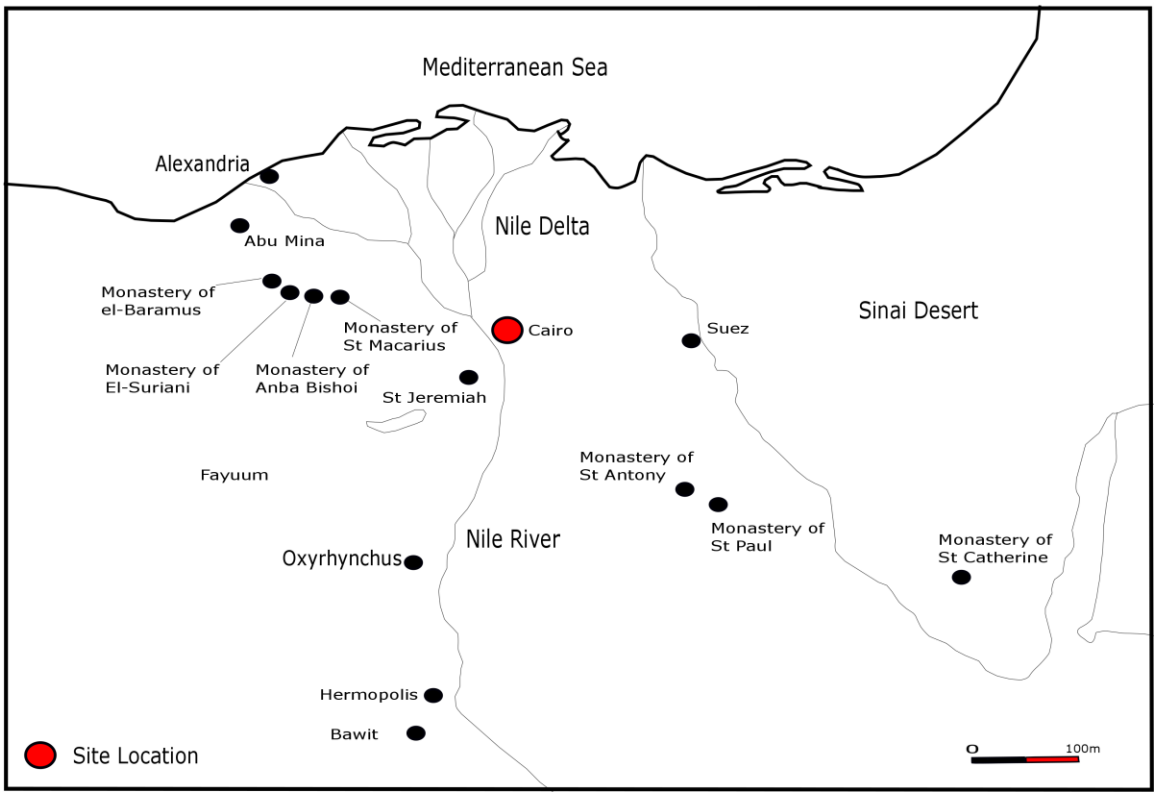

Fig 6.1: Map of Cairo and the surrounding area (Derived from Finneran 2010: 10)

Cairo as it stands today was not always one large city; it is formed of three former capital cities of different Muslim dynasties. The oldest of these was Fustat (it derives from the Latin term 'fossatum', which meant the ditch which surrounded the original Roman garrison site Babylon in Egypt; Williams 2002a). It was formed in AD641 by Amr Ibn al-As when the Umayyad dynasty defeated the Byzantine army and drove them out of Egypt (Brend 1991: 46). Fustat was the capital of Egypt until the Abassids rose up and overthrew the Umayyad dynasty in AD750 and seized power for themselves. Once in power they moved their capital to al-Askar, north of Fustat. In turn their Empire crumbled and they were conquered by the Tulunid dynasty; they cemented their dominance by building a new capital called al Qattai in AD868. This city was destroyed in AD905 and resulted in all three of these cities fused into al Qahari (Cairo, meaning ‘the Glorious one’) by AD969 (Behrens-Abouseif 1989: 5). This disjointed urban history is reflected very clearly in the urban layout; if you compare a map of Cairo with the Greco-Roman plan of Alexandria, you can clearly see linear classical town planning fossilised at the latter site. Cairo is very much more of a fragmented urban character. The church complex of Haret Zuwaila is one of the only medieval churches which has survived outside of Old Cairo and the walls of the Fortress of Babylon and is therefore an excellent case study to focus upon.

6.2 Historical background and environmental issues

The district of Islamic Cairo is where the Fatimid dynasty originally held their court and built their palaces. The churches of al Adra and Abu Sefain are located in the Khurunfish district of Cairo (Wissa 1991: 1207), near to Al Muski and off Shari Bain al-Surain. Al Maqrizi, the 13th-century Islamic chronicler described the Khurushtuf district as originally a large Maydan or square near to the Fatamid palace and al Kafuri gardens (Al Maqrizi 1906: 27). Subsequently, it was transformed into a large stable complex, but by the 16th-century it was a very affluent area with many expensive houses and bustling market places. There is a lack of sources for the area between the 16th and 18th-centuries but during the time of Mohammed Ali (1769-1849) it became highly industrialised, and was transformed into what Pascale Ghazaleh has termed a 'manufactory' (a whole district of Cairo devoted to manufacturing a (2002: 125). The manufactory was initially designed for the production of silk and then subsequently cotton and textiles (2002: 128). By the 18th-century, clearly, the affluence of the area had deteriorated and had become quite impoverished, the district has never recovered.

The modern Khurunfish district is poverty stricken and suffers from several endemic problems. The population of Cairo is growing at a considerable rate, in 2003 the population was between 14 and 15 million people (Sims 2003: 3), but by 2008 this had increased to over 16 million (Kielty 2008: 202). This overpopulation of the district is exacerbated by the lack of through-fare roads (Al Ahram 1999a); there are large roads which cut through the district but it is mainly formed of small winding streets which can cause blockages to traffic and increase the pollution of the area. The population is a distinct mixture of both Muslims and Copts both living side by side; David Sims records in his census of Cairo that there are no isolated pockets of minority cultures living in Cairo, or ghettos (Sims 2003); this is in distinct contrast to other large urban centres such as London and New York where there are large areas of people from a singular ethnic origin (for example, areas dubbed 'Chinatown'). There are no such enclaves in Cairo; thus, there is a true mixture of cultures within the district. Haret Zuwaila is therefore a local church for the Coptic community and plays a central role in the daily lives of those Copts living in the Khurunfish district.

In the past, scholars have recognised the need for a comprehensive conservation plan for Islamic Cairo as a whole (Helmy and Cooper 2008: 196); the need is justified, aside from the overcrowding problem, there are significant pollution problems which also need addressing. Recently an ARCE project funded by USAID, mapped the historic monuments and buildings in the Islamic district, including Haret Zuwaila (2005: Plan 26), this is being followed with UNESCO funding of $80,000 to rehabilitate the area (UNESCO 2015b). The Khurunfish district is home to a large aluminium factory which emits large amounts of smoke into the local neighbourhoods; this creates staining damage to local historic monuments. In addition, there have been reports in the past that the local ophthalmic hospital is contributing to the water pollution of the area (Al Ahram 1999a). Together with the lack of ventilation caused by overcrowding, these are significant threats to the district and are causing significant long-term damage not only to Coptic monuments but all historic places in the Islamic district.

Perhaps the most significant problem that historic monuments in Cairo face is the damage inflicted by the high-water table. The work of Jerry Rogers and Francis McManamon (1994) and Caroline Williams (2001/2) has raised the issue of the irreversible damage caused to historic monuments by the sewage water in Cairo. The greatest problem is the lack of a decent sewage system (Williams 2001/2: 593). Reportedly up to 40% of potable water is lost from leaking sewage pipes (Attia 1999: 86; Williams 2001/2: 593). This water is then reabsorbed into the ground and increases the level of groundwater. Previous attempts have been made to lower the groundwater; in the early 2000's the Old Cairo Groundwater Lowering Project was implemented to try and deal with this issue (during which ARCE recorded the archaeological foundations of many historic churches in the district; Sheehan 2010). A new sewer system was also introduced, and resulted in a half a metre drop in the water table (Lawler 2006: 327). Caroline Williams noted the level of groundwater was often only one and a half metres below the surface (Williams 2001/2: 593), even with a drop of half a metre, the ground water level is still too high and threatens the integrity of building foundations. The other contributing factor to high water tables in Cairo is the use of agricultural techniques surrounding Cairo; indeed, Cairo is built upon fertile agricultural land (Sims 2003: 2). The construction of the Aswan Dam in 1968 was meant to stop the annual flooding of the Nile (Radwan 1998: 130), it has had some unintended consequences, namely the increase in the water tables in the Delta region.

The use of farming techniques and use of water is strictly prohibited, although evasion of these regulations is commonplace (Radwan 1998: 131) and this results in an increase in water levels throughout the Delta region. Having outlined some of the general environmental issues which impact upon the preservation of historic buildings in the city of Cairo, we now turn to the historical background to the church complex of Haret Zuwaila.

Not many historical sources survive that pertain to Haret Zuwaila, but what does survive is an account by Abu Salih the Armenian writing in the late 13th-century who offers a construction date of at least 270 years before the Muslim invasion, adding that its original name was named after a physician by the name of Zabilun (1969: 326). The dating of the church attributed by Abu Salih would make its original construction Roman in origin and is therefore very unlikely as there was not a city built on the land during this period. The current church is not the original building the chroniclers described; the persecution of the Fatamid Caliph Al Hakim (996–1021AD) ordered all churches razed to the ground (Al Maqrizi 1873: 89-90), so it is entirely probable that the original church was destroyed during this period and subsequently rebuilt. During the year 1168AD, the church was built over by Al-Bustan (a fief to Fakih Al Baha) creating a two storey church (Abu Salih 1969: 3); this upper church does not exist anymore. The church held a place of distinction when it became the patriarchal seat from 1303-1675AD (Capuani 2002: 132), until it was moved to nearby al Mu'allaqa. There are very limited historical sources for Haret Zuwaila and we know nothing about the church from the 14th-century up until the 18th-century when the church of Abu Sefain was built in 1773/4AD (Capuani 2003: 132) by local Copt Ibrahim Al Jawhari (Wissa 1991: 1208). Recent archaeological excavations nearby have allowed for a more informed dating of the church. In 2005, the American Research Centre in Egypt concluded a large-scale excavation project within the limits of the Fortress of Babylon in Old Cairo, funded by USAID. During these excavations, they discovered the original foundations to Abu Sarga and the Jewish Synagogue of Ben Ezra and from this could give some solid conclusions to the original construction date for the churches in Old Cairo and the surrounding area (Sheehan 2010: 85). Peter Sheehan summarised the findings by suggesting that Abu Sarga was founded in the early medieval period around c. 644-715, just after the Arab conquest; no evidence of construction during the Roman era was found. The implications from this excavation for dating Haret Zuwaila are important as it finally allows an archaeological sequence to be built to be used to

provide dating for the churches, rather than purely relying on architectural dating of the standing buildings, which have been heavily accredited and altered in the subsequent centuries. Peter Sheehan's conclusions were that Haret Zuwaila was probably first constructed around 1072 (Sheehan 2010: 95), based on similarities to the architectural reconstruction of Abu Sarga and Ben Ezra in the Fatamid period.

Aside from the ARCE's projects within Old Cairo, previous scholarly work has been notably absent on the churches of Haret Zuwaila. The *Comité* performed repairs to the church throughout the late 19th and 20th-century and these were documented in the journal *Bulletin du Comité de Conservation des Monuments de l'Art Arabe*, but the most substantial work was written by Alfred Butler in 1882; his book*, The Ancient Coptic Churches of Egypt* gives a good overall description to the churches. It is unfortunate that since the late 19th-century, no Coptologist or historian has offered any more in depth analysis to the churches. Alexander Bawady (1953) and Oswald Burmester (1955) both wrote a short description of the complex which relied very heavily upon Butler's initial evaluation and added nothing new to the study of the church, acting mainly as an aide-memoir to visitors. More recently Gawdat Gabra (1993), Otto Meinardus (1999), and Massimo Capuani (2003) have written descriptions, however, these have been very brief statements of the layout with a few pictures of the church and do not offer any new insights into its history or help to date any of its architectural features. Therefore, it is the authors own observations which will try to provide more analysis of this understudied church.

Fig 6.2: Map of Islamic Cairo (Warner 2010: Plan 26)

6.3 Description of the church of Al Adra and Abu Sefein

The church of al Adra follows the basilica floor plan which is predominant throughout Egypt; in particular, a heavily altered two-aisled basilica is often located in Cairo (Burmester 1955: 10). The main body of al Adra is 28m E-W by 19m N-S and consists of a nave and two aisles; the nave is nearly five metres wide, this is almost double the width of the two aisles which are two metres wide. The layout of the church suggests that originally there may have been four aisles rather than the current two. The width either side of the aisles reveals there would have been a space of four metres; today the entrance and southern aisle of Abu Sefain occupies the western end of this space. This entrance juts out 3.8m into al Adra; we know this was built in the 18th-century, so before this was built, there would have been space for another aisle. The pillars that stand today are not original, they have been cut into the floor; these were evidently not their original position.

The division has allowed the current sanctuary (Heikal) to be built in the north-west corner of the church. The entrance in which visitors enter today is not the original (Butler 1884: 10). It is evident the original entrance has been lost during one of the

churches renovations, although it is not obvious where the original once was; there is no evidence it was situated along the western wall. The whole south-western quarter of al Adra has been redacted inwards by four metres thus removing the southern aisle which may have been present and creating a rectangular shaped transept to the east. The reduction of space along the southern wall and the incursion of the entrance to Abu Sefain appears to have had a number of effects; firstly it reduced the amount of space available to the narthex; it is entirely feasible that the narthex and its accompanying early ritual of washing the feet (the ritual is known as Maundy), and purifying before entering the church (Kamil 1987: 78) was no longer practised and therefore its original function was redundant allowing the reuse of space and the building of a new chapel and entrance to Abu Sefain. Supporting this argument is the lack of a baptismal chamber as seen in Abu Sarga; there are no architectural remains to be found in the narthex which suggests when the church was rebuilt, the baptismal chamber was abandoned.

The transept may be compared to others in both Cairo and the Delta. Transept churches outside of Cairo are different in form to those found in Cairo. The churches at Marea and Hermiopolis offer the clearest examples of transept churches in Egypt; they differ in appearance and have rounded ends which are encircled by pillars (Grossmann 1991: 1212). This contrasts with those found in Cairo where the ends are flat as opposed to round; the pillars do not encircle the transept, but rather follow the straight line of the aisles. The textbook example of this design can be viewed at Abu Sarga in Old Cairo. Gawdat Gabra stated that the original transept cannot be traced (1993: 138), this is not entirely accurate. Al Adra appears to have been built without a transept and adapted at a later date to incorporate one. The shape of the transept is not a uniform rectangle unlike Abu Sarga, rather its walls run at odd diagonal angles (pers. obs). This might be attributed to the church being built in a heavily built up area where space was at a premium and the congregation wanted to gain as much space as possible. Abu Sarga's uniformity suggests it was built with a transept in mind, in contrast, al Adra's odd shape and alteration of the southern wall alludes to it being built at a later date. The brickwork is of a different type and build at the southern end of the transept to the rest of the building indicating that the shape of the transept was altered subsequently.

In conclusion, al Adra has been considerably altered throughout the centuries; the architectural evidence suggests it was originally a four-aisled church which has been reduced to two aisles. The use of the narthex had become redundant in the 18th-century and so its space was utilised to create a new chapel and the entrance to a new church: Abu Sefain. The transept, it would appear was not an original part of the churches design, the stonework to its southern liminal edge is different to the other parts of the church indicating the distinctive rectangular shape was created long after the church was rebuilt in the 12th-century. The odd shape of the overall floor plan and its use of diagonal angles does suggest the church was built during a period where there were many surrounding buildings; it almost seems to have had to follow a pre-determined shape, unlike the more uniform, rectangular shapes of Abu Sarga and al Mu'allaqa. It is entirely possible the period in which it was rebuilt was different to the churches in Old Cairo; the space in which the churches were built may allude to the fact that there were no structures nearby which forced them into a predetermined shape; indeed, the fire of Fustat in 1169AD or another great calamity may have allowed these churches to be built more uniformly; whereas al Adra did not have this luxury.

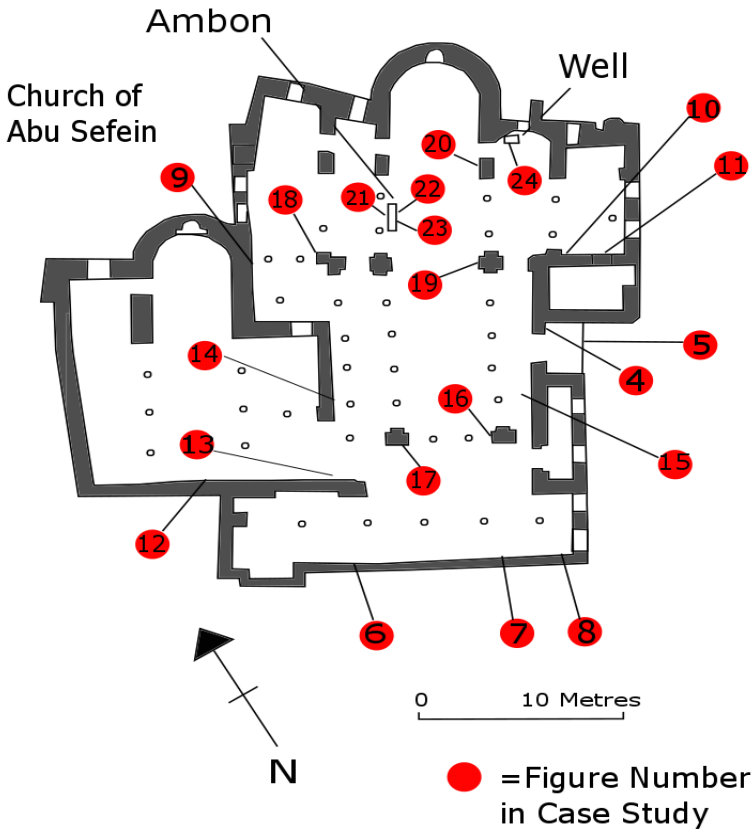

Fig 6.3: Plan of the church complex of al Adra and Abu Sefain (Capuani 2002: 131).

6.4 Condition survey of both churches

The appearance and atmosphere of the Khurunfish district is one of poverty. The road leading up to the church, Shari Bain al-Surain, is littered with rubbish; the houses surrounding the church are extremely dishevelled with missing paint, broken walls and the dirty stained patina of sand and weather worn brick. This is not a problem localised to this district, much of Cairo is the same, and could be considered by some to be part of its charm. The church and convent are accessible by walking down a narrow corridor and a number of steps to get to the entrance. The height of the modern day street is proof the church is very old (circa 6.5m higher than the church), but it does not allow us to attribute an exact age of construction. The path which leads to the exterior of the church is much cleaner than the rest of the district; concrete paving slabs have been lain giving easy access which contrasts heavily with the dirt tracks that are the norm for the Khurunfish district. The walls to the east and west are built from limestone blocks to create a corridor leading into the church, they are a relatively new build.

White crusts and black marks are visible upon the blocks; these appear to be salt efflorescence and pollution stains. Just in front of the main entrance is a wooden information board used to impart information to the local Coptic community, it does not have any English notices (**Fig 6.4**). Above the entrance is the second floor of the church, the outside wall appears to be a new façade created from blocks of limestone and are re-pointed neatly (**Fig 6.5**); one modern wooden window is visible in the centre of the wall and wires protrude from a hole in the wall, connecting to another further away. To the east of the entrance is a small window to allow the priest to talk to the laity, beneath is a small wooden box for donations; both are built into the entrance. Overall, the exterior of the church of al Adra is in good condition and has benefited from care by the local community in keeping it clean and well maintained. The walls to the east and west leading to the church are of no real significance and are modern looking, their upkeep is important from an aesthetic vantage; if they become dirty and stained the church will look uninviting to tourists who visit on their own volition. The salt stains are an early indicator that the water flowing around the exterior drain is being absorbed into the masonry and this is a problem that must be dealt with swiftly.

Fig 6.4: Outside of the church of al Adra. Signage is visible as are pollution stains on the stonework.

Walls

The walls of al Adra are in a poor condition; the western wall in particular is in a state of degradation brought upon by the high water table in Cairo (as previously discussed) which enters into the church via 3-4mm wide holes in the lower course of the wall. The *Comité* repaired the walls in 1917-18 (*BCCMAA* 1915-19: 209), although no further information is given except that they were repaired and subsequentally in 1950-51 the plaster on the walls was repaired also (BCCMAA 1946-53: 299). The age of the walls is unclear, a number of calamities occurred in the 12th-century such as a major earthquake in 1138 and the crusaders burning Fustat in 1168 (Sheehan 2010: 99) so it is unclear whether they are Fatimid in date or possibly later Ottoman rebuilds; it is more likely the latter. They have numerous accreditations that have built up over hundreds of years. Small patches of brickwork are visible under a mixture of white plaster and cement. White and brown salt stains are visible across the whole surface at intermediate intervals, but the lower courses are in a worst state owing to the constant running water coming out of the numerous small holes at the bottom of the wall (**Fig 6.7**). Both ends of the western wall have been truncated and damaged to fit new square brick piers to support the upper floor; it creates a conflicting image of clean,

dry, new piers, contrasting with the dirty, constantly wet western wall. The north-western edge has a new pier abutting it, a thin patch from the top to the bottom of the wall is much cleaner indicating when it was built, the crusts and stains that accumulated on the wall were knocked off, intentionally or not. The top of the western wall has modern concrete built onto it to hold an electrical box (**Fig 6.6**).

Fig 6.5: Newly built outside facade of the church; scale one metre

Fig 6.6: Western wall of al Adra. An electrical box mounted on a recent concrete skim can be clearly seen.

Fig 6.7: Ground water seeping into the church via the western wall

Fig 6.8: Stains visible from the constant running water down the western wall

The other walls do not suffer obvious running water damage, there are no water pipes within them, yet they still carry the stains and crusts that are associated with salt accumulation. The south-eastern wall does not have visibly lain brickwork, rather it is constructed from roughly hewn limestone which has remnants a brown plaster covering parts of it still (**Fig 6.9**). This indicates that it was perhaps built at a different time to the western wall which has a careful uniform bond of headers and stretchers. Built into this wall are two square metal framed windows, they are modern in date. The southern wall (**Fig 6.10**) has a more discernible bond of alternating lines of headers and stretchers. Not all of the bricks can be seen due to creamy white and brown plaster covering pasts of it. Built into this wall is a wooden beam above the door to the sanctuary of. Above this beam is a bricked-up archway, originally this would have been a stone doorway (**Fig 6.11**).

Fig 6.9: Northern wall of the al Adra Church

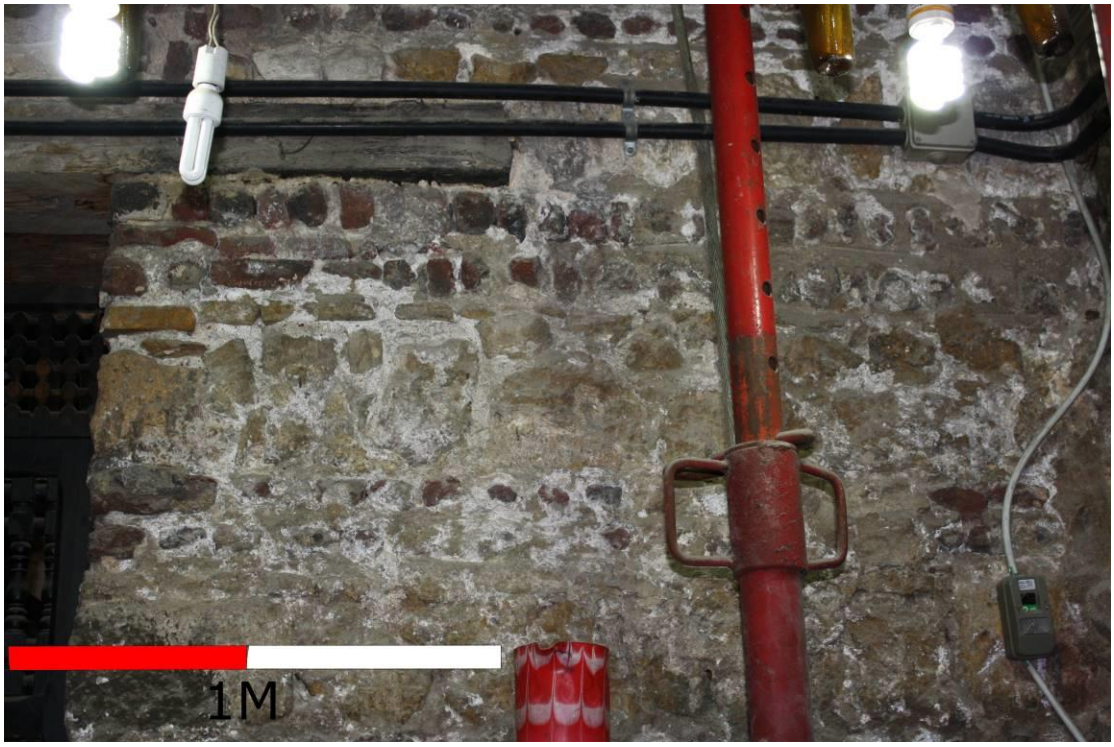

Fig 6.10: Southern wall of al Adra church

Fig 6.11: Bricked up archway in southern wall of al Adra church

Walls of Abu Sefain

The western wall of Abu Sefein (**Fig 6.12**) is inflicted with the same running water problem as the western wall in al Adra. The wall is not fully covered in crusts and salt efflorescence and the bond is visible; the lower course is made from large, red rectangular bricks that alternate in a header and stretcher bond. This is separated by a line of large yellow brick which is underneath four courses of small red brick all in header form. The lower courses are covered in white plaster, while small water outlets are inserted sporadically along the wall. This section is divided from the rest of the western wall by a large crack which follows the whole length of the wall. On the north side is a slightly different bond, ten courses of stretchers are at the bottom of the wall, this is separated by rectangular yellow stones and are in turn beneath three courses of stretchers of red brick. This alternates up to the top of the wall. At the base of the wall are metal water pipes that lead into the drain that follows the inside of the church; these deposit water straight into the drain beneath.

The constant water flowing from the western wall is a problem that needs immediate rectifying; the water is introducing salt efflorescence into the brickwork and creating white crusts which are disfiguring and hiding the medieval brickwork. The

eastern and southern walls have fared slightly better owing to their proximity to the ground water. However, salt crusts are evident on these walls which indicate the water is being absorbed by the bricks also. The medieval walls of one of the oldest churches in Cairo must be repaired and consolidated; there are only a few other examples of medieval Coptic architecture in Cairo along with Abu Sarga and al Mu'allaqa. Therefore, they are a significant part of Coptic heritage; if they are left to degrade further, the damage may be irreversible.

Fig 6.12: Western wall of Abu Sefain, which shows the construction of the medieval walls of al Adra and the 17th-century walls of Abu Sefain

Entrance to Abu Sefein

Fig 6.13: Archway dividing the two churches. Note the modern plaster is covering the historic masonry

The entrance to the church of Abu Sefein is an open space which is centrally located, and connects the two churches together (**Figs 6.13 and 6.14**). The space is divided into three archways that have recently been re-plastered; the previous bond of brick is still visible at the western end and appears to be stone that has no clear bonding pattern and a repair using new brick. Prior re-plastering works have occurred here in 2009; the work has covered any original brickwork from the 18th-century.

Fig 6.14: Close up of the masonry dividing the two churches

Floor

The floor of the church is made from concrete, covered with mortar, but in places it has been broken to allow the pillars to be slotted into it. The *Comite* removed the original floor and replaced it with a new concrete cement topped with a water repellent mortar in 1948-49 (*BCCMAA* 1946-53:138). The surface that once protected the stone from shoes has been worn away and is only left in small patches throughout the church floor; the floor is wearing away slowly from constant usage. Circling the outside of the floor is an internal drain (**Fig 6.15**), it is crude in design and has been roughly cut into the cement floor all around the interior of the church. The water pours from the small holes in the western wall and drips onto a stone step and from there into the drain. It is in a bad condition and in need of insulation to prevent water seeping through the cracks in the floor.

Fig 6.15: Internal drain that encircles the interior floor of the church of al Adra

Pillars

There are eight pillars that delineate the nave and two aisles of the church. Most are the same style and material although a few differ; this would indicate they may have been imported when one was destroyed or damaged. The south western most pillar is carved from granite and has a rough finish. The Corinthian capital is square in shape; no detail remains on the capital as it appears to have been worn down smooth (**Fig 6.16**) and it has been re-joined with the pillar using modern cement. Above the pillar is a thin slice of wood onto which modern square plaster has been used to support the upper floor. The pillar has brown staining visible in lines emanating down the length of the shaft. The pillar against the north-western wall is constructed from brown marble rather than granite, with a square Corinthian capital built upon it (**Fig 6.17)**; the detail

is visible upon this one, although it has been worn down considerably. The pattern is of intricate foliage which suggests a late antique date, and the possibility of it being a reused feature. The brown stains which were visible on the previous pillar are visible near its base. The capital appears to not be original and has been attached at a later date. This too has been attached to a square wooden chock onto which the modern plaster pillar is built upon. The north-eastern pillar (**Fig 6.18**) is also constructed from brown marble and has a capital with a simple geometric pattern; it has a worn appearance and as with the other capitals it has been attached to a brick pier which rests upon it.

The pillar nearest to the entrance is also made from brown marble (**Fig 6.19**); it has iron clamps around it holding a wooden box onto it, this has caused rust marks to form around its diameter. The capital is ornately carved with pointed foliage but has cement marks where the wooden chock has been attached to it to hold up the modern plaster pillar above it. This is identical to the pillar next to the eastern wall. A pillar is situated in the northern sanctuary but is in very poor condition; carved similarly to the previous ones from marble, it has no capital remaining and also has brown stains down its length. The final pillar (**Fig 6.20**) is located next to the well at the south-eastern area of the church, it has polished brown marble which is noticeably lighter at the top and gradually turns darker towards the bottom. The capital is an ornate Corinthian capital but is clearly not the original one as it is not carved from marble but granite; they are probably spoila from earlier Byzantine or Roman buildings.

Fig 6.16: Badly worn capital with a newly built brick pier built upon it

Fig 6.17: Corinthian capital with mortar joining it to a wooden chock above

Fig 6.18: Marble pillar with Corinthian

Fig 6.19: Marble pillar with brown stains running down its shaft (probably iron oxide

staining)

Fig 6.20: Marble pillar with iron stains

Ambon

The ambon (pulpit) is situated at the north-eastern part of the church in front of the apse and it has been noticeably repaired. The steps are original, but the banister at the side is constructed from modern concrete (**Fig 6.21**). The steps have white stains on them and are in a poor condition, concrete has been used to fill small holes in the sides of the original steps. Only half of the front portion of the ambon remains, the rest is carved from plain plaster. The design of the ambon is nearly completely symmetrical with the outside of the pattern surrounded by a raised border; each corner has a small Coptic cross within a circle and at the centre of the design is a rectangular pattern which encompasses flowing floral leaves. At its centre is a Coptic cross (**Fig 6.22**), but the overall design is marred by a large scar that runs diagonally across the design. It is held up by four identical, short columns with twisting volutes (**Fig 6.23**). It has been partially reconstructed already by plastering around the remaining ambon, yet, there is more that could be enacted to protect it. The use of concrete to patch up damaged parts is particularly ill thought out and must be reversed in the future.

Fig 6.21: Reconstructed stairs of the ambon

Fig 6.22: Side of the ambon, complete with half of its original geometric design

Fig 6.23: Pillars upon which the ambon rests

Well

The well is at the south-eastern part of the church, next to the apse (**Fig 6.24**); it has been cut into the concrete floor and is covered by a modern metal grate; a modern rusty pipe allows water to be pumped into the well. The well does not have any insulation to protect the granite from water damage; this is something which may be viable in the future. The well has a significance not only the local community, but to all Copts in general. It is believed that the well was blessed by Christ during the Holy family's flight from Herod (Meinardus 1999: 195), the laity throw coins into the water for good luck. Therefore, conserving it and making it available for use, but preventing any further deterioration is of paramount importance.

Fig 6.24: Well next to the eastern wall

6.5 Significance

The church of al Adra is one of the most well preserved medieval churches in Cairo, and the only surviving historic Coptic church in the Islamic district. The church holds a local significance to the Copts living in the Islamic quarter, it is their local Church where they come to pray and is therefore hugely important to their daily lives. The church is extremely rare, with only a handful of Coptic churches surviving the Muslim persecutions of the medieval period nearby in Old Cairo. It holds particular historical significance to the Copts, having been the seat of the patriarch for nearly three centuries, with written evidence to tie the church to particular liturgical rites performed here (Abu Salih 1969: 11); part of its significance is tied into its link to a long line of Coptic patriarchs that have presided here and a tangible link to its liturgical history, not often recorded in historical documentation.

The church arguably holds a global significance to wider denominations of Christians; the site is believed to have been a stopping point for the Holy Family during their flight from Herod. The church is part of the Holy Family Tour package offered by Egypt's Department of Tourism and other tour companies, and as such, other types of Christians such as Orthodox or Evangelical's will hold the church to be a significant

historical Christian site with a direct link to the Holy Family. The church itself contains a number of architecturally valuable pieces of religious furniture. The Ambon is one of only three medieval examples remaining in Cairo, and is still in use. It is clearly a rare piece of architecture and all attempts to protect it should be made. In addition to the Ambon, the well against the eastern wall is believed by the local Copts to have healing properties, derived from the Holy Family visiting the site.

The church Complex should not be viewed purely in isolation, although it is situated in the Islamic district, it is in close proximity to the medieval churches in Babylon, Old Cairo. Although Haret Zuwaila certainly contains architecture that can be compared with other churches of the medieval period, its real significance is in its group value as part of a broader collective of non-Muslim, ecclesiastical buildings. The church of al Adra has been proven to be close in architectural style to the churches of Abu Sarga and al' Mu'allaqa, which also share similarities to the Ben Ezra Synagogue within the fortress of Babylon. All of these religious buildings should be viewed as a group of historically, architecturally and culturally valuable ecclesiastical buildings that as a whole, contribute to the understanding of medieval culture, architecture, church design, ritual and archaeology.

6.6 Mitigation strategies

Current Management

Currently the church complex is owned by the Coptic Church, whilst any conservation work must be approved by the Ministry of Antiquities; the daily management of the church is undertaken by the clergy who tend to the daily prayers and needs of the laity. Legislation pertaining to the conservation of religious properties is in Law 117 of 1983. Article 30 describes what the religious institutions duties are pertaining to conservation and restoration; the Coptic *Waqf* Organisation are responsible for funding any conservative action that is required and any work which is deemed necessary is undertaken in consultation with the Ministry of State for Antiquities. Therefore, any future remedial action must be approved by the Ministry of State for Antiquities. Previous funding for the conservation of Haret Zuwaila was donated by the private heritage group National Egyptian Heritage Revival Association (NEHRA); the association

is a group of affluent Muslim and Coptic business owners who are concerned with the state of many heritage monuments. They donated 100LE million pounds (£7,813,635 Sterling) to aid in the restorative effort of all churches on the Holy Family Trail (Al-Ahram 1999b), of which Haret Zuwaila is a part of. All previous conservation efforts have been funded through NEHRA.

Previous conservative action was undertaken by the Ministry of Antiquities in collaboration with NEHRA and the Coptic *Waqf* Organisation intermittently from 2007 to 2010. The Ministry of Antiquities has been unforthcoming in releasing any conservation plans relating to this project, therefore information has been gleaned from talking to local Copts and local news coverage. The first phase (Arab West Report 2008) was carried out in 2007 under the supervision of Conservator Mina Ibrahim and focused upon: restoring the icons and woodwork in the church, cleaning and restoring the walls of al Adra and Abu Sefein and installing new stronger steps outside, which lead to the church. The second phase carried out in 2008-9 focused upon installing new lattice windows at the entrance, fixing the water leakage problem via a series of perforated pipes and filters and building brick piers upon the pillars to support the upper floor. During the site visit in 2012, the walls were being cleaned of their accreditations and salt crusts and the pump system to prevent water from coming into the church was underway.

Issues of concern

There are a number of issues of concern regarding the management and previous conservation efforts at Haret Zuwaila which we could raise in the light of our earlier contextual analysis. The first issue that is apparent, is the unavailability of a conservation and management plan; the lack of transparency is not limited to this one project, all conservation projects performed by the MOA do not have accessible conservation plans. It is entirely possible that one was created for this project but the MOA have not made it available if it exists. It is left up to observation and reports in the media to gather clues as to how well the project was completed and if it has adhered to international charters of conservation (Burra and Nara charters in particular). The problem with this lack of transparency means that it is not known for sure whether or not a system of checks and balances has been ensured, nor if the correct policy of minimal intervention and retention of authenticity were at the forefront of the project.

It is also very probable that a detailed survey of works including a photographic survey and elevations of the brickwork were not completed prior to the projects commencement. Judging by the results, it is clear that in this case, some areas were adhered to and can be commended, but others have not been conserved in a correct manner, for example the historic walls.

The walls of al Adra and Abu Sefein have both undergone cleaning and and the installation of a pump system to counteract the water which is running into the complex. The cleaning of the walls did remove the dirt and salt encrustations; the manner this was achieved however was unknown, it is likely that sand blasting was used which can be particularly abrasive and remove finer detail from masonry. The pump installed in the western wall, however, can be considered a necessary piece of preservation, without it the walls would have continued to degrade. The use of plaster to cover some of the medieval walls of al Adra is not in keeping with minimal intervention and it is unknown if it is compatible with the medieval brickwork. It is unknown whether the plaster used is reversible and if it can be removed without damaging the brickwork beneath. The medieval walls of the church of al Adra and the 18th-century walls of Abu Sefein are rare examples of medieval Coptic architecture, to cover them with plaster is to reduce the authenticity of the church and ultimately it will reduce its significance to both the local Copts and to the study of medieval architecture and Coptology. The use of plaster also deprives future archaeologists of the ability to make a detailed section drawing of the walls (and perhaps allow a confirmed dating for the church), or a detailed photographic survey, and in the future, those wishing to try and compare its architectural style with other churches in Cairo and further afield will not be able to do so.

The consolidation of the pillars in 2008-9 focused upon building modern brick piers upon the pediments. These modern piers were covered in plaster and bonded with mortar. Unfortunately, they have been bonded in an unprofessional manner, and have added an unoriginal material to the historic pieces of architecture. In addition, it is unknown whether the mortar is compatible with the pillars, but given the overall lack of conservation expertise, it is likely that it is not. This is storing up problems for the future. Unfortunately, there are still stains visible upon the pillars, ruining their appearance. These have not been cleaned to this date. One ongoing problem was the groundwater seeping from the wall, underneath the floor and impregnating the pillars.

Now the water issue has been remedied it is hopeful that the pillars will no longer absorb any water, but again this may not be a sustainable long-term solution.

The ambon was rebuilt using modern plaster; only half of the original remains on the left side and the small pillars upon which it rests. The ambon is one of the most significant pieces of furniture in Haret Zuwaila; it is one of only three surviving ambons in Cairo (and one of those is in the Coptic Museum). It is therefore extremely rare and should be given the utmost protective measures. It has not been recorded in any fashion before the reconstruction was completed. This is a significant error and one which would not be suggested by conventional heritage conservation praxis. As one of the only architectural features that is actually used on a daily basis in the church it should have been afforded more protection during previous conservative actions; it is clearly quite fragile and it may have been more prudent to have moved the original to the Coptic museum, while a facsimile was created to be used for a day-to-day usage. Finally, the floor is in a poor condition and is well worn through consistent use. It was rebuilt by the Comite in 1950 so although it is not historic, it should be protected more to stop it becoming more degraded and having a negative aesthetic affect upon laity and visitors.

Short and Long term goals for the management of the Church

The foregoing sections have outlined some of the key issues regarding the preservation of the fabric of this historic church. Let us now consider approaches to conservation strategies over two timescales; the short-term and long-term. The potential lack of a management plan is problematic, as it is unknown whether there is a system in place for MOA inspectors to re-evaluate the effects of the project within a set time period. It could be argued that every few years it should be evaluated to determine that the pump is still effective and that the use of plaster on the historic walls has not created any adverse effects such as cracking or bubbling of the plaster.

The primary short-term goal should be to set-up a system of monitoring for the previous conservation work, and in particular to ensure that the newly installed pump system which removes water from the wall is actually performing to a satisfactory level. A date for checking its performance should have been already set but it should at least have a yearly check-up and assessment in the first instance. The period required

to check the church can be lengthened after the first two years once it has been established the system is running efficiently.

The plaster which has been placed over the walls of Abu Sefein and al Adra should in the short term be monitored also to determine their compatibility with the masonry and to note if there have been any adverse effects such as cracking of the plaster. These are relatively low-cost and sustainable measures which do not require specialist input, and if anything could involve the local Christian community in its implementation. This would have mutually beneficial effects. The long-term goal should primarily be the removal of the plaster to reveal the medieval/18th-century masonry; the previous restorative efforts have misguidedly covered over what makes the church so appealing to visitors; the ambiance and link to past periods. This action would return authenticity and significance to the church once more and would be in keeping with the Nara charter for authenticity. It may be appropriate to clean any remaining salt efflorescence from the walls; if this is required then a non-invasive approach is appropriate; the use of mild interventions such as clay poultices or neutral chemicals may be utilised. Plaster when used as an aesthetic measure merely has the ability to cover up structural problems. In occasions, such as this, it may be best left off the historic walls (after all, there are no frescoes or paintings).

It is unknown whether a structural engineer was consulted during the consolidation of the brick piers onto the pillars; therefore, it would be prudent to consult a structural engineer during the monitoring of the church to ensure it is safe and will remain standing in the long term. The mortar that was used to bond the wooden boards to the pediments is out of keeping with the ideal of only using original materials and the application has left a lot to be desired with mortar left on the pillars. Once it has been established there is no more water running into the church, the voids surrounding the base of the pillars should be filled-in with a modern material that is sympathetic to the original floor style so as to not stand out and detract from the overall style of the church. The well as noted previously, has not been touched in prior conservative action, but it does still hold significance for the local community. Any invasive action should not be attempted; there is nothing structurally wrong with it, but in the short term a new pipe and metal grate could be fitted to better protect it and reducing the likelihood of damaging the floor underneath, this will also have the benefit of making it appear more aesthetically pleasing.

The ambon is highly significant to the Coptic community; therefore, it should be treated carefully and provisions should be made to stop or limit visitor's ability to touch or rub the fine detail. If left unchecked the damage will be irreversible and it will become stained by visitors sweat and the floral design will eventually erode. There are a number of possibilities to achieve this objective. The first and most cost effective is to cordon off the ambon from the rest of the church so only laity may use it; this will not physically stop visitors but will act as a deterrent. Secondly a plastic barrier could be installed over it to physically stop visitors touching it; utilising this method would not be in keeping with the aesthetic of the church, so is not recommended. The third option would be to remove the original ambon and replace it with a copy. The first option is the favoured one and would be relatively easy and cost effective. The floor is particular worn and uneven and would benefit from enhanced protection. The easiest way to reduce erosion of the floor via grit particles on visitor's shoes, is to lay aesthetically appropriate carpets or floor coverings to stop any more damage. By doing this, it will reduce the need for a costly repair in the future.

It should be pointed out that any future conservation work should try to limit the disruption to the local community. One of the primary issues with any future conservation work is the disruption to the local population who use the churches on a daily basis. Any conservative efforts will impinge on the daily life of the churches; workmen will be restoring walls, pillars and other architectural features, this will result in an abundance of noise and the cordoning off areas when they are being renovated or restored, thus limiting and reducing the local laity's ability to pray in peace. Every day the priests hold liturgy, therefore it is important that any conservative work must take into account the daily schedule of the Coptic clergy. Any work must be enacted at periods when there will be minimal visitors. The installation of cordons and in some cases the use of scaffolding may be required; in these instances, it should be carefully signposted with signage explaining what is occurring and why.

6.7 Tourism and Social Factors

The restoration project funded by NEHRA in conjunction with the Ministry of Antiquities was designed to increase the amount of visitors to Christian sites via a 'Holy Family Trail' (Williams 2002: 458); the tour would include other churches in Old Cairo,

but all of these churches required a degree of renovation and repair before it could be packaged to tourists. The repairs and renovations conducted between 2007-2012 were part of this initiative. The idea of Islamic Cairo as a single coherent heritage site rather than individual monuments was part of this focus (Williams 2002: 457). Therefore, Haret Zuwaila should not be viewed narrowly as a tourist attraction in its own right, but as part of a larger tour which encompasses all of the churches in Historic Cairo. A number of specialist heritage tourism companies such as Memphis Tours and Viator (Memphis Tours 2016; Viator 2016) do offer tours around all of the Coptic monuments in Cairo, including the churches of Old Cairo and the Coptic Museum, so to improve the visitor experience a number of ideas may be suggested.

The types of tourist to Haret Zuwaila are likely to be those with an interest in Christian history or architecture and some may potentially be on a pilgrimage to visit a site where the Holy family stopped off during their flight from Herod. It is not at risk of mass tourism, it is 'off the beaten track' and rather difficult to find without a guide or considerable personal effort. It is unfortunate that much of the internal architecture was covered with plaster as this really removes one of the primary reasons certain tourists will want to visit the church. Although there is unlikely to be a large amount of tourists visiting Haret Zuwaila at one time, control of tourists is essential to not overload the site during busy periods when tour groups come visiting; this is something that is important because the church is in use and is not purely a heritage site; it is a living heritage site that has a role in local Copts lives. It is important to limit stress loads upon the church, as any large group could adversely affect the historic fabric via unwanted touching and continual abrasion of the floor. This control can be enacted in a responsible manner and is not a new idea, it is actively employed at larger sites such as the Pyramids at Giza. Limiting the amount of visitors that can enter the church would be a viable option, although to enforce it, there would need to be a representative of the Copts at the church at all times. What may be more appropriate would be a sign in English and other European languages that signals to visitors to be respectful and which sets a limit for visitors at any one time; this creates an atmosphere of mindfulness as typified by Gianna Moscardo's study in chapter 5.

Charging for entry at Christian sites is a thorny issue; Pharaonic sites such as Luxor, charge what in the Egyptian context is quite a high entry price (Tokeley 2006: 258), but obviously, these sites are much more well known, popular and are not living

heritage sites. Charging at a site such as Haret Zuwaila may be problematic, there would need to be someone to take the money at the entrance at all time, this is not a viable option, there is not always a member of the clergy at the church. It would be a far more reasonable to install a donation box with a large sign and charge large tour groups coming en masse before they get to the church. In response to foreigners getting upset over being charged, there are two options; they can be charged the full rate but give discounts for large groups to entice them into sites, particularly urban sites which are hard to find on your own down winding maze-like medieval streets, or they are asked for donations with boxes strategically located around the site, an idea which Niall Finneran notes may be a good idea (2009: 9). The argument that many scholars are wary of the 'user pays' principle (Fyall and Garrod 2007: 153), is irrelevant. If there is no charge for visiting sites then they may fall into disrepair and eventually we will have failed our job of protecting them. This view is outdated in its outlook, and may work for nationally funded museums; Coptic sites rely on donations at present and if they do not charge even a nominal amount then we will have a larger and more expensive problem of trying to raise money to fix crumbling walls.

6.8 Conclusion

Al Adra and Abu Sefein are rare examples of standing medieval and 18th-century church architecture within Cairo, their significance is tied to their rarity but also they retain a strong spiritual focus for the local Christians. Previous conservation work conducted between 2007-2012 had its merits; the water pump used to reduce the level of water coming into the church of al Adra should be considered a positive move; action was urgently required to prevent further deterioration of the church walls and this intervention performed some limited but effective mitigation. Other actions such as the cleaning of the walls and the replacement of steps leading to the church can be considered positive actions. Other conservation actions cannot be considered acceptable; the plastering of historic masonry, while completed with the best of intentions, has reduced the authenticity of the church and merely served to 'cover up' the problem as a cosmetic measure.

The lack of any future management plan or a prior conservation plan is also a cause for concern for the management of the structures. Without adequate documentation, there is the probability that there will be no subsequent monitoring of

the new materials added to the historic fabric. The newly installed pump should be monitored and checked closely and at the very least after a year to determine whether is a success or if new interventions are required. Without a detailed plan in place this may not occur. The lack of a pre-recording mission before any conservation work was completed is unfortunate, any historic material now removed or covered cannot be recorded via photography or elevation drawings; this is lost forever. Therefore, a full photographic survey should be produced in conjunction with a detailed plan, elevations of each wall and recording of the furniture within (such as the historically important ambon); this can be completed relatively quickly and easily, but would require the consent of both the Coptic Church and the Ministry of State for Antiquities. This could be performed as part of a larger conservation rapid assessment to determine the current state of the church and if there are any remaining problems, or if the previous conservative actions have created new ones. As the accent is on sustainability and community involvement, it would be a relatively easy exercise to mobilise interested and capable members of the local community and demonstrate to them how this work can be undertaken. There seems to be a reluctance in Egypt (shared perhaps in the 'bad old days' in England) for heritage professionals to jealously guard their expertise. They are seen as 'specialists' and work such as this, which is after all relatively low-grade monitoring and recording, is not beyond the remit of the community. A little bit of knowledge transfer and engagement could make the process more democratic and sustainable, but this may demand a change in the mind-set of the Egyptian heritage professional community.

Clearly, there is an economic need for more tourists to visit Coptic sites in Cairo and indeed Egypt; Haret Zuwaila is not the best situated church for tourists to stumble across while exploring Cairo; being situated in nondescript alley in the Islamic quarter it is easy to miss. Therefore, it is likely only tourists who are taken by a guide will find the church. With this in mind, the church is mostly visited by local Christians and it is inappropriate to alter the church in such a way as to impose on the local laity and their daily prayers. It would be more in fitting with the character of the church to have maps with historic background and salient points of interest printed in a number of European languages. The conservation work carried out between 2007-2012 was completed to increase the volume of tourists and to include the church as part of its Holy Family Tour. It remains to be seen if this initiative has been successful (especially in the light of a general trend in a decrease of tourism in Egypt after the Sharm el Sheikh terrorist

attacks of 2016). If it is to withstand an increase in visitors there must be improvements to the most worn areas of the church such as the floor, as well as basic interpretation material too.

The Haret Zuwaila case study has offered our first look at the problems and possibilities of the management and interpretation of Coptic Christian built heritage in Egypt. What is clear is that in spite of best intentions, a number of corners have been cut in terms of good heritage practice. Documentation is poor, as is choice of conservation material and approaches. Some interventions appear to have worked, others are less successful. First and foremost, this is a place of worship, so the needs and wishes of the local Coptic community should be listened to. A workable place of worship is the main desire, after all. However, there are the competing views of heritage professionals and local stakeholders, and pressure to raise revenue (of what is a relatively invisible site) through raising visitor numbers. What we must not lose sight of though, is that this is a community asset, and as such there are a number of ways at the lower end of the intervention scale to involve these stakeholders in the conservation of the church: photographic recording and monitoring, for example (but how this approach would sit with the Egyptian professional heritage cadre is open to issue). Having assessed the church complex of Haret Zuwaila which presents its own set of problems as a relatively 'invisible' part of Cairo's built heritage, we now look in the next chapter to a much larger and more complex site which sits in a rural context, but which through its role as a pilgrimage centre of great importance has a much more significant international context: The Monastery of St Paul.

Chapter 7- The Monastery of St Paul

7.1 Historical Background

The Monastery of St Paul is situated along the Red Sea coast 20km south of Zaafarana and near to the tourist resort of Hugarda (See **Fig 7.1**) (Kamil 1987: 129); it is often referred along with the nearby Monastery of St Antony as one of the Red Sea Monasteries. These monasteries are secluded and remain difficult to access and it is this factor which has contributed to their preservation and also impacts upon visitor numbers. Indeed, William Lyster (2008: 1) and Gawdat Gabra have both remarked that St Paul's Monastery was one of the most isolated Christian settlements from the rest of Egypt (2007: 220). Their remoteness from the outside world is not surprising, the monasteries are surrounded by the imposing cliffs of the Galala plateau which itself has been cut by the Wadi (Dried riverbed) al-'Araba (Lyster 1999: 32); if one wishes to gain access, a journey across cliffs and desert is a certainty. It is this element of pilgrimage and attainment which makes this monastery a very special type of Coptic heritage site. It is a world away from Haret Zuwaila, yet still has its own special set of management problems and issues.

The sole access before modern roads connected the monastery to the rest of Egypt, was to sail along the Nile and to then travel across the desert on Camel; an arduous journey for anyone but the fittest and most determined traveller. It becomes apparent why there were so few visitors to the Red Sea Monasteries in antiquity. It is only with the advent of new roads in the 1980's which allowed easier access to the monastery by both western tourists, local parishioners and pilgrims. Gawdat Gabra noted in 2007 that these roads were broken and in need of repair (2007: 200), fortunately the roads leading to the monastery were renewed as recently as 2012-13 (Father Arsenios 2012: Pers. Comm).

The monastery is named after St Paul of Thebes; his life, was recorded by the letter writer and theologian St Jerome (Born c. 347 AD), in the latter half of the 4th-century. The *Vita Pauli* chronicles Paul's journey into the desert to flee the Decian persecution (250-251) where he settled into the life of an ascetic hermit, living in a

cave and being sustained on fruit from a nearby palm tree. Perhaps the most famous part of the book is where St Antony travels to meet St Paul after receiving a dream from God about him. After finally tracking him down to his Cave hermitage, they enter into discourse with one another and are fed by a raven which supplies them with bread, which they break together. St Antony leaves, but when he returns he find St Paul dead at the age of 113. St Antony wraps his body in a tunic, ready to be buried when as the legend goes, two lions appear to excavate a grave for St Paul.

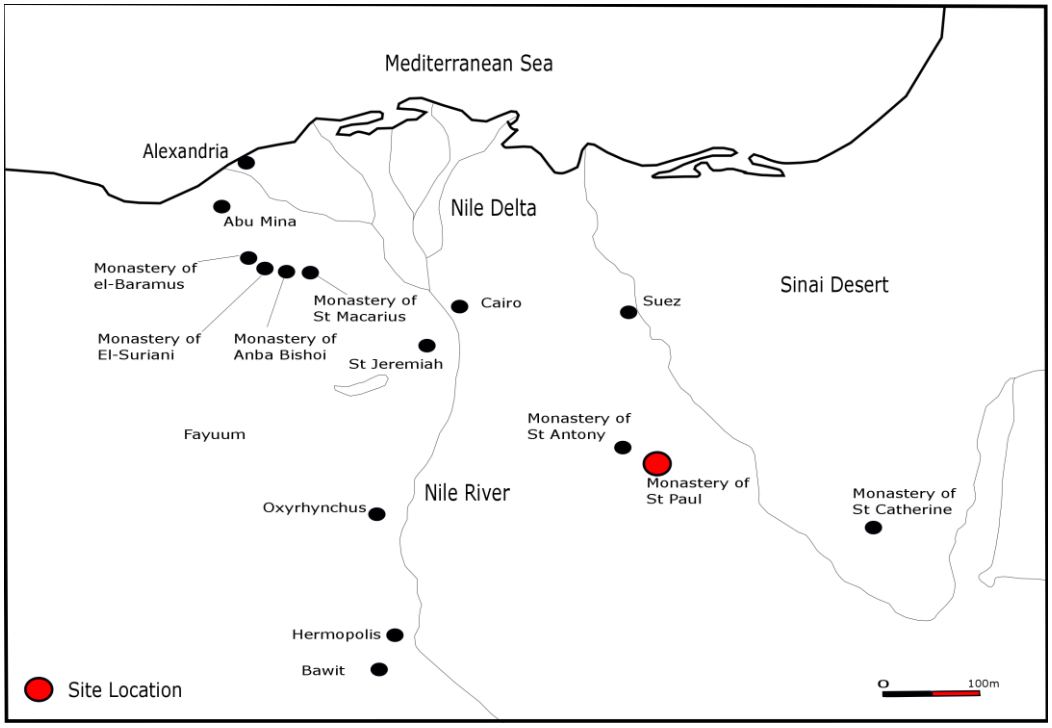

Fig 7.1: Map of Egypt showing location of the site (Derived from Finneran 2009: 10)

Scholars have examined the *Vita Pauli* and in particular the motivations of the writer St Jerome; it is apparent that he would have been well versed in the *Vita Antonii* written by Athanasius and fascinated with the lives of the saints (Frank 2000:1). It has generally been agreed by scholars that it was written for a western Roman audience (Davis 2008: 27), and he would have been aware that St Antony was portrayed as the perfect Christian, Steven Driver posits he could not be 'supplanted' by any other Saint (Driver 2002: 46). Therefore, when Jerome was writing the *Vita Pauli*, he could only make St Paul more virtuous than St Antony by making him the 'original' ascetic hermit; one that was more devoted in the eremitic lifestyle, he is able to sustain himself, for example, on less food than St Antony (Driver 2002: 47). In St Paul, Jerome had created a potentially equally devout and ideal Christian; it has been suggested that he was the

'Christian Cicero' (Hritzu 1943: 230-1), a writer with excellent penmanship and the ability to engage the reader in the subject matter. By making St Paul such a devout Christian, it made the site a really important pilgrimage centre in late antiquity much like the pilgrimage site of Abu Mina discussed in the next chapter.

The impact the *Vita Pauli* had on Latin-speaking Christians was therefore quite powerful; it is suggested that within a decade or two it had become widely disseminated and would have become famous throughout Christendom (Davis 2008: 27); Christians reading the book would have become interested in the Life of St Paul, where he had lived, prayed, conversed with St Antony, and ultimately died. The structure of the *Vita Pauli* heavily draws upon the Life of St Antony, by Athanasius, with the bulk of the emphasis on the pilgrim Antony, not on St Paul (Frank 2000: 96-7). The *Vita Pauli* not only gave an insight into the life of a revered saint but also galvanized a significant amount of Christians into undertaking a pilgrimage to his cave hermitage, and allowed them to travel in the footsteps of St Antony. While Jerome's Life of St Paul was not designed as a guide for pilgrims (Frank 2000: 44), it must have had the effect of inspiring and galvanising Christians from far flung parts of the Roman Empire to embark upon a pilgrimage to the Cave of St Paul.

Thus, it is entirely probable that Christians from across the Roman Empire would come to pray at the hermitage; Georgia Frank noted that Egypt was already a land of wonder and prodigies to the Romans pre-Christianity, citing Herodotus' *Histories*; by the time Christianity becomes the state religion, pilgrims visited Egypt to gain a better understanding of the scriptures (Frank 2000: 46; 104). We know that there were large cult centres within Egypt during the 4th and 5th-centuries; Abu Mina (examined in chapter 8) was so large and visited in such frequency that they mass produced small ampullae to be sold to pilgrims, these created a connection between visitor and shrine (Frankfurter 1998: 12). Obviously, there were Christians who travelled on a pilgrimage, others, however travelled to the hermitage with the intention of living the same virtuous and ascetic life, the area around the cave is full of cave hermitages; at some point between the 4th and 5th-centuries these hermits banded together to form a communal Pachomian or Antonian settlement.

It is unclear when this single cave church grew to become a fully-fledged monastery, but it is likely that between the 4th and early 5th-centuries a small

population of monks, attracted by the stories told of St Paul, set up a small hermitage which grew in size over the centuries; scholars such as William Lyster support this theory as a hypothetical account of the growth of the monastery as we see it today (Lyster 2008: 12). Jill Kamil believes that the evolution of the monastery began with buildings congregating around the cave where St Paul lived (Kamil 1987: 129), which grew from there. The church of St Mercurius is built upon the Cave Church of St Paul the Hermit, which is believed by scholars to date to the 4th-century. William Lyster believes it to have probably become a chapel shortly after the death of St Paul (Lyster 1999: 40), although there is no evidence to support this assertion it is likely he was venerated after his death.

The lack of written ancient sources which relate to the monastery is particularly problematic when attempting to deduce a chronology of how and when the monastery sprang into life. There are a few scant references to the monastery in Roman antiquity. The Roman writer Sulpicius Severus (c. 401) mentions in his *Dialogues* that he was to visit the place the hermit Paul had dwelt. (1.17). Rene Coquin and Maurice Martin believe this indicates there was no monastery at the time (1991: 742). The second mention by an ancient source comes from Antoninus Placentinus' *Itinerarium* (1898: 151) where an unnamed pilgrim travels to the monastery but only mentions the spring, not the monastery.

The dearth of historical records or accounts for St Paul's monastery continues into the Islamic period. Abu Salih writes about the nearby Monastery of St Antony, but neglects to mention St Paul's Monastery. The nearby monastery of St Antony appears to have been uninhabited after the monks were murdered in c. 1484, based on a note by Patriarch Gabriel III (Coquin and Laferriere 1978: 278); Lyster records that St Paul's monastery was also sacked in this period (Lyster 2008: 53). With a lack of historical sources, it is left to various western travellers and adventurers to document their travels to the monastery to try to build a picture of the monastery over the middle ages; the first was Ogier d'Anglure in 1395, followed by Jean Coppin in 1638, Claude Sicard 1716 and Richard Pococke in 1737 and Thomas Whittemore in the 1930's to name a few; for a full list of visitors to the monastery, see Otto Meinardus' entry for Anba Bulain in the *Coptic Encyclopedia* (1991: 741). All wrote descriptions of the monastery and is a tantalising glimpse into the monastery's past.

We can learn from Coppin's travels and subsequent accounts, that the monastery was crumbling and vacant from at least 1638-1665 when their travels took place. It is known that a significant period of repair in the 18th-century was instigated by Patriarch John XVI (1676-1718). Walls were repaired and heightened to their current dimensions, the mill and refectory were built (Lyster 2008: 16), and the monastery was repopulated with monks. It is during this period of improvements that the church of St Mercurius was enlarged and the three domed sanctuaries were built abutting the north of the church. The next extension and large scale repair came in the 1930's during the Thomas Whittemore expedition. The defensive walls were extended to enclose the spring, while the gate to the south east was created (Lyster 2008: 18).

There is clearly a lot of blank periods where we know nothing of how the monastery operated and what structures were built; much is left to educated conjecture or comparisons with other similar Coptic monasteries of the period. Sadly, previous modern scholarly studying archaeology and architecture of the Monastery of St Paul has been quite limited in relation to the study of the standing buildings and archaeology. Jill Kamil examined the Monastery briefly in her 1987 book on Coptic Egypt, she recorded that the pulley system was the original entrance (1987: 127), but offered little more than a basic outline of the monastery. Both Otto Meinardus (1991:741) and Massimo Capuani (2002: 167-68) only offered a brief outline of the history of the site. All authors do not go into any real depth on the subject and only offer 'coffee table' book information; that is to say a brief précis on the monastery and no real substance. It has been left to the American Research Centre in Egypt to perform the most comprehensive archaeological study on the site; in 1999 William Lyster wrote a report after conservation work was carried out between 1997-1998 as part of its Antiquities Development Project. This was perhaps the most in depth study of the monastery until ARCE published the *Cave Church of St Paul the Hermit* in 2008; this focused upon the conservation efforts by ARCE to conserve and consolidate the Cave Church of St Paul, and the 18th-century refectory and mill. The removal of historic building material in these buildings allowed ARCE and Michael Jones (Project Manager and Coptologist) a rare opportunity to study and analyse the different construction phases and the techniques employed in their building. Not only were the buildings studied but the wall paintings were cleaned and studied in detail; the resulting publication by Elizabeth Bolman was published alongside the results from the conservation in *The Cave Church of St Paul the Hermit* (Lyster 2008).

This chapter focuses upon a re-evaluation and examination of the work performed by ARCE, and to look at other areas of the monastery where it may need more conservation work. In addition, it will touch upon the area of heritage tourism at the monastery and what measures could be taken to ensure that the historic material does not become damaged through both malicious damage and accidental overexposure, and that the interests and wishes of the local Copts and monks are adhered to. Although, the monastery has been studied in the 2008 ARCE monograph, it predominantly focused upon a singular project; to conserve and repair the mill and refectory and to conserve the wall paintings in the Cave Church of St Paul. Hitherto there has been little written about the other buildings in the monastery, and it has been over seven years since the conservation work ended, therefore this work shall provide a conditions survey for much of the monastery that was not covered by the ARCE project and a reappraisal of the works conducted in the Mill and refectory. The next section contains a photographic and conditions survey of parts of the monastery to determine what state the historic buildings are currently in, and whether current conservation methods are proving to be effective.

7.2 Description of the Monastery of St Paul, its churches and ancillary buildings

The monastery of St Paul is situated in the eastern desert, at the base of a plateau overlooking the Gulf of Suez (Lyster 2008:2). The area is extremely inhospitable and before the main road was built connecting it to the modern world, it took considerable effort and pre-planning to reach the monastery; this is the primary reason it has survived destruction where many other monasteries, particularly in the Wadi Natrun have been attacked and destroyed. The monastery sits at the base of the southern Galala plateau, with a local geology that is primarily limestone with chalk and clay deposits; sediment from the top of the plateau periodically is washed down to the base by flash floods (Lyster 2008: 3). These flash floods have coated the area with a thick layer of *tafl*, a type of clay mixed with small pieces of limestone and in some places is three metres thick (Lyster 2008: 4).

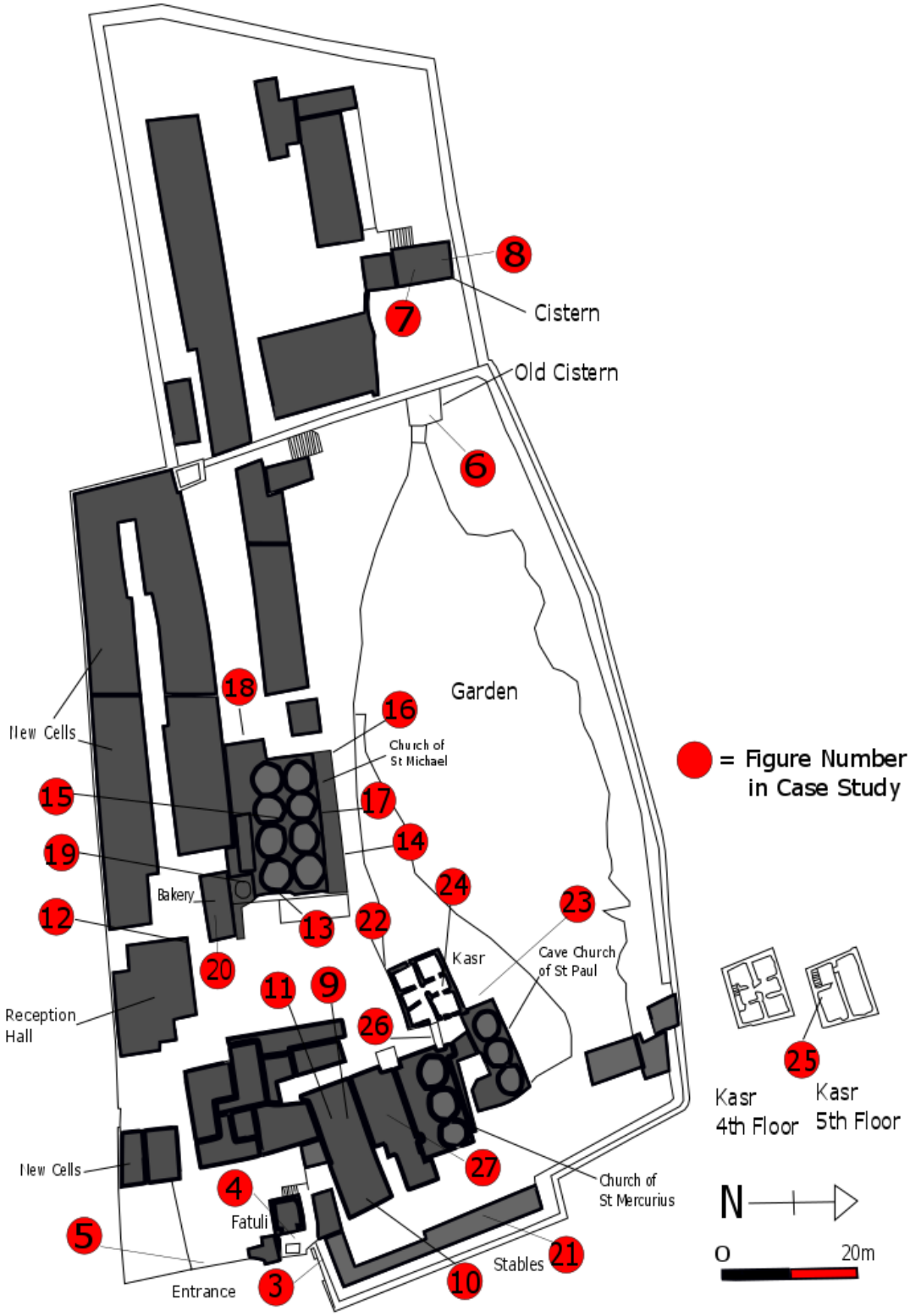

Fig 7.2: Plan of the Monastery of St Paul (Lyster 2008: 9)

The large entrance archway (**Fig 7.3**) is a 20th-century construction, built during the reign of King Faroq in the early 1900's, a few years before the Thomas Whittemore

expedition arrived. The entrance was built using uniformly cut, yellowish-white limestone blocks. These have been flattened and are distinct from the original un-shaped walls into which it has been cut through. The entrance comprises a rounded archway with a carved Coptic cross above the keystone; a modern wooden information board displays local information in Arabic. There are no non-Arabic language notices visible at the entrance, and as such it is clear that the interpretation is not one aimed at western tourists. The emphasis at the outset is on a private, inward looking place.

Figure 7.3: North facing facade of the main entrance

The original entrance to the monastery is known as a *Ma'tama* and a *Fatuli,* this was a small room built on top of the originally bonded limestone wall, adjacent to the modern entrance (**Fig 7.4**). Entry was gained via a small wooden hatch built into the wooden floor, where a hoop or small basket would be lowered down, and either a person or food would be hoisted backup via a pulley and turn wheel (Lyster 1999: 37). The outside of this room has been plastered over, obscuring the bond of the masonry, however, the bottom right corner has been missed allowing a glimpse of the masonry beneath. Beneath the plaster is a course of small bricks, coated in an off-white paint. This entrance is built using different materials to the defensive wall, indicating that this

entrance was built later than the defensive wall and if this is the case then there must have been a different entrance to this one. The original entrance is a highly significant part of the monastery with only a few examples across Egypt still remaining; it should be noted that there is a similar *fatuli* and *ma'tama* at the nearby Monastery of St Antony. Due to its rarity, it is highly significant to Christian archaeology and an important part of the original Roman structure.

Figure 7.4: The original *Fatuli* entrance

The external walls are built from several different types of material and coursing, suggesting multiple periods of building and rebuilding (**Fig 7.5**). A broad date of between 530 and 870 has been given by William Lyster (1999: 34) for the initial building of the walls; it is not possible to gain an accurate date just through examination of the walls. The numerous rebuilds of the walls are evident in how visually different they are from each other, and by how differently the stonework has been bonded together. The lowest build of the walls comprises roughly shaped limestone blocks, lain in horizontal rows which have been randomly coursed and bonded with a lime mortar; it is probable that these date to the original founding of the monastery in the 4th-century. The type of stone or brick built upon this build of

roughly hewn limestone blocks is obscured by a layer of yellowish-white plaster. The bond is unknown but traces are discernible where the plaster is not as thick. It appears that it too is a build of sandstone blocks, but they are smaller in size and have been slightly recessed from the lower, original construction of the wall. This may have been an addition to try and bolster the monastery's defences against Bedouin attacks. Built upon this layer of stone work is a single row of unbaked brick placed upon their side; this row delineates the lower professional build from the roughly bonded limestone pieces which sit upon it. The upper limestone build is less well constructed than the lower courses; the bond is much looser with more spacing between the stones and they are of differing shapes and sizes. It indicates a construction by much less skilled workers than those who built the lower, original defensive wall.

Figure 7.5: Outside wall of the monastery

To the south of the entrance, modern buildings have been built adjacent to the outer defensive wall; four small square windows have been cut through to provide

additional light to these rooms. The masonry next to the new windows has become damaged and replaced in a disorganised manner which creates a dishevelled and damaged appearance to the top build of the wall. The modern buildings built next to the defensive wall are known colloquially as 'Manhattan' (Jones 2008b:129). He notes that the construction of modern buildings alters the character considerably and this is true, the contrast between the crumbling modern buildings and the ancient walls is stark and intrudes negatively upon the visitor's first impression.

Internally, against the eastern defensive walls are stairs which allow access to the upper portion of the walls (this would have allowed the monks enough time to see any approaching bandits and retire to the keep for protection). These stairs are built into each defensive wall and are of the same construction era as the limestone wall. These stairs lead to a small, square defensive keep (or Kasr), this would have been used as a lookout for the monks. The keep was built in two different stages, the original fourth-century keep was created using the same limestone blocks as the defensive wall and was constructed as part of the original defences of the monastery. There appears to be a second phase of construction on top of the rampart which has been constructed using bricks, much akin to the second phase of the defensive wall and the original entrance to the monastery. A strip of plaster has been applied to the inner side of the defensive wall, reportedly to test the type plaster and its colour. The conclusion must be that although the defensive walls are internally structurally safe and aesthetically pleasing, the intention to plaster over the original stonework would be in error and would reduce the historical value of the site by removing the ability of the visitors to view fourth-century standing buildings and not a modern 21st-century plaster walls.

Just beyond the main entrance is a small staircase which leads to the ramparts and the upper level. The staircase is a new build using limestone blocks which are similar in colour to the ancient walls, although there a few which differ in colour (red and light yellow as opposed to a more muted greyish-yellow); the mortaring of the stones is roughly finished, implying perhaps a monastic, rather than a professional repair with it covering vast portions of the stonework and distinguishing it from the ancient stonework next to it. The wall to the north of the modern staircase abuts this and is part of the original staircase; the join is noticeable. It is built of the same limestone and mortar as the defensive walls. Modern plaster has been applied to a

portion of the wall, obscuring the stonework, this is a modern addition to the sandstone wall. Built against the north-eastern wall area number of small rooms, which in the past were used as manuscript storage. It was built from the same limestone but it has been covered in a thin layer of plaster obscuring the individual stones. The small rectangular holes which punctuate the wall indicates a structure was previously built into the north-eastern corner; the holes are consistent with wooden beams which would have supported the roof. The southern wall has had a doorway built into it towards the eastern end; the doorway has been built using very similar coloured limestone blocks; it is almost indistinguishable from the ancient wall. A modern wooden lintel was incorporated into the frame; the original stonework was removed and replaced with plaster above the lintel. The walls and ramparts of the monastery are excellent examples of early eastern Roman Empire construction with examples of later rebuilds, potentially into the Islamic period. While there are other examples of this type of construction at the monasteries in the Wadi Natrun area and at the Monastery of St Antony, the walls are an integral part of the monastery's character and offer insights into its history, such as the need for defensive walls to protect against Muslims or Bedouin tribes.

Cistern and Spring of St Paul

The cistern is a modern built building which is used to store the natural water from the spring of St Paul (**Fig 7.6**). The walls which surround the cistern are a new build and were constructed using stone blocks and covered in a sand coloured plaster; they have been built using the same materials as the original walls but are a few metres shorter and have been coated completely in a thin plaster obscuring the bond. The walls have created an enclosure against the original western defensive wall; this wall, while the same in build to the other defensive walls; has several buttresses which help maintain stability.

Figure 7.6: Outside wall of the cistern

The spring of St Paul is situated to the west of the monastery and the cistern. A 30-metre channel supplies the monastery with water and deposits it into the cistern, which is located within a modern building (**Fig 7.7**). While the spring is a naturally occurring phenomenon, the channel is a modern build, with different coloured limestone blocks, roughly mortared into an arched corridor. The water feeds into a small room with a shallow channel that feeds into a small circular pool (**Fig 7.8**). The spring is no longer the only source of fresh water for the monastery and water is brought in daily via trucks (Father Arsenios 2012: Pers. Comm). Although the spring is a naturally occurring water source, it has taken on a new significance to both Coptic Christians and non-religious visitors. The spring is believed by Copts to be the source of water that sustained the hermit Paul of Thebes during his semi-eremitic lifestyle within

a cave and is therefore part of a much-valued Christian narrative. Therefore, its significance lies in its link to a Coptic Saint, and is viewed by the local population as both a vital water source and as a sacred place where a saint once utilised. To visitors it will not be seen as a sacred monument, but rather as a natural source of water that has sustained a group of monks over two centuries and allowed the monastery to flourish.

Figure 7.7: Entrance to the Spring

Figure 7.8: Pool where water is collected within the spring cave

The Mill

The mill was initially constructed in the 18th-century. The outside was rendered in 2012 using a whitish yellow plaster, vertical lines run down each of the external walls. The eastern wall has four recessed windows with a lattice covering; curved wooden branches have been used to prop the recessed portions of the windows up. The door to the mill is a modern brown coloured door, with a wooden lintel above it. There are small areas around the doorway which had not been completely plastered at the time of my visit; they displayed darker coloured limestone blocks. The mill is known to have been constructed in the 18th-century, it may be viewed by some as lacking in a significance when compared to the medieval Keep and the defensive walls. Age does not automatically confer significance; many 18th-century buildings in England have been given listed statuses, yet in Egypt, significance tends to equate to age and scale in the heritage narrative. The mill and refectory offer a glimpse into a post-medieval construction phase of the monastery, the use of material and the construction techniques used are invaluable in understanding how the monastery was built over time. When ARCE removed the plaster and roof they recovered invaluable data on how

Coptic builders in the 18th-century constructed a building. The project revealed many timbers supporting the roof were reused, and that there were several phases of construction, with mud brick used to repair a number of walls (Jones 2008b :130).

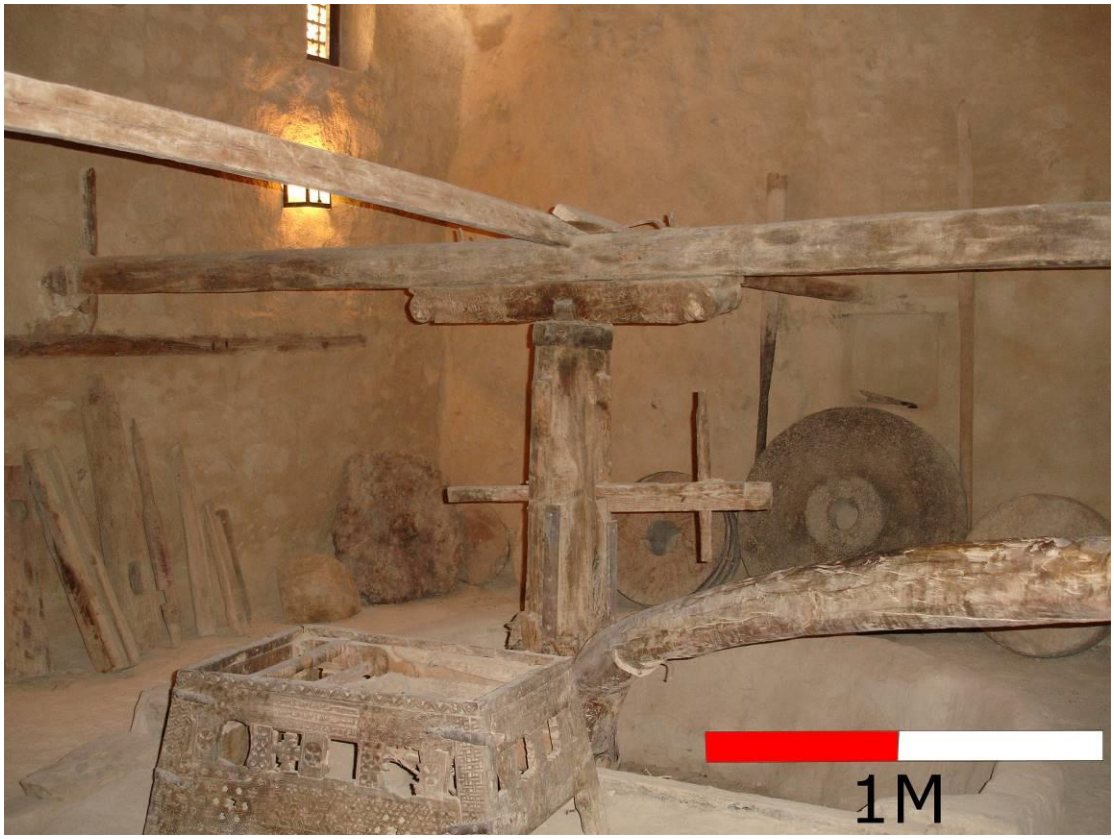

Figure 7.9: Turning wheel of the 18th-century mill.

Figure 7.10: Eastern wall of the mill.

Figure 7.11: Newly conserved roof of the mill.

At the centre of the mill is a circular hole into which a vertical post is built (**Fig 7.9**); a horizontal beam is attached through this post; in the past a horse or donkey could be attached to this horizontal beam and would walk in circles powering the mill. The mill has recently been renovated with more detail in section 7.3; the walls have been plastered carefully (**Fig 7.10**) and the roof has had new reeds installed (**Fig 7.11**). Both are aesthetically well done. There are spare yokes and wooden canoes resting against the wall. The yoke and pulley and other wooden devices used in the day to day running of the mill are original and date to the 18th-century. Their significance lies in the authenticity, these are the actual tools used by monks in the 18th and 19th-centuries, thus they offer a window into the everyday workings of the monastery and allow visitors and scholars a tangible, authentic link to the past, as well as a very real physical link for the monks to their own heritage. One may even view the tools as part of a lost way of life, one that has not been seen for at least the past century, the monks no longer use to the canoes to fish, nor do they make their own bread using donkeys to power a mill, therefore the items hold a deeply spiritual and historical value towards the local monks in particular, and should be treated as equally important as the fabric of the building.

Reception Rooms

Figure 7.12: North facing wall of the reception rooms

To the south of the monastery is a reception room, (**Fig 7.12**), it, like the mill was being plastered on my visit there, so the masonry beneath was not discernable. The building is two storeys high with a new balcony built onto its side. It is an important structure, however, and being able to receive and house visiting dignitaries such as a bishop from another church, particularly when access improved in the latter half of the 20th-century would have been vital. Its function as a receptions room has been abandoned since the construction of a new, much larger and modern guesthouse complex to the south of the monastery. The new plastering has caused the building to look out of place compared to the more historic structures nearby, with its modern appearance contrasting with the old bakery and Church of St Michael.

Church of St Michael

The church of St Michael was constructed in 1727 under order of Pariarch John XVII (Lyster 1999: 54). The exterior is constructed from roughly hewn limestone blocks; portions of the walls appear to have been roughly repaired and covered in plaster at some time in history. Areas of the eastern wall and bell tower have been covered in a thicker, more modern plaster (**Fig 7.13**) and electrical wiring has been attached to the northern wall (**Fig 7.14**) with the same type of thick plaster. Internally the church, while it has some aesthetic issues, it does not have any structural problems. The central nave is divided into three section, with the central area filled with chairs, and eastern end containing two haikels; one to St Michael, the other to St John the Baptist. The walls are covered in plaster, none of the original masonry is visible. The lower portions of the walls have been painted, and are now heavily distressed and faded. The church is rather small, so there is the issue of potential overcrowding at peak times.

Fig 7.13: Eastern outside wall of the Church of St Michael.

Fig 7.14: External northern wall of the Church of St Michael.

Fig 7.15: Nave of the Church of St Michael and St John the Baptist.

Fig 7.16: Northeastern shrine to St Michael.

Fig 7.17: Archway leading to central sanctuary.

Fig 7.18: Northern wall and window of Church of St Michael.

Fig 7.19: South western wall of the Church of St Michael.

Pharmacy/Bakery

To the south west of the Kasr stands a small rectangular shaped building (**Fig 7.20**). It is built differently from the older buildings with a rougher build and resembles the type of build found at the mill. A modern, ramshackle white door has been inserted into the eastern wall. The stone workaround the doorway has been crudely filled in; it is apparent the doorway was created by knocking the original wall through. The walls have been built in a cruder form than the ancient walls, limestone blocks have been used but they have been covered sporadically with a darker yellowish plaster. The southern wall has a number of modern additions; a window has been built into it and is covered with a gauze shutter. William Lyster recorded this building as an old bakery (Lyster 1999: 97), and this may have been its previous usage, however, father Arsenios relates that it is now used as a pharmacy (Father Arsenios 2012: Pers. Comm).

Fig 7.20: External view of the pharmacy

Old Stables

The old stables are situated close to the main entrance; the building is c. 1.5m high and has two doorways cut into it. It appears that the lintel above these doorways is much wider than the door indicating that in the past they were much wider, presumably to allow horses inside (**Fig 7.21**). The roof has been damaged and has been constructed by laying wooden beams across the ceiling and coating them in a mixture of limestone which has subsequently hardened. Three square holes are present beneath the ceiling and the originally these would have housed support beams for another ceiling. The stables are not used for their original purpose, and instead are now used as storage (potentially manuscripts) for the monks.

Fig 7.21: Outside wall of the old stables.

Keep

The keep (**Fig 7.22**) was originally built to protect the monks from attack by various external threats such as Bedouin tribes and later became invaluable against Arab aggression during many of the periods of unrest. The original date of construct is uncertain with Christopher Walters offering a 10th or 11th-century construction date (Walters 1974: 90), although he admits that the current keep may be built upon the foundations of a much earlier one. Externally the keep (or *Kasr*) is built from the same materials as the defensive walls which enclose the monastery; roughly hewn sandstone blocks, in a random bond; the size of the stones ranges from small to medium. On each side of the keep, several small windows are noticeable, these were used to provide air and sunlight if the monks ever had to retreat to the keep for a lengthy period of time. The keep has four floors, of which the rooms are accessed via a steep staircase. The lower portion of the keep is wider than the top, providing a sturdier base, this appears to be a more modern addition due to the difference in building materials. The base is constructed from slightly larger and more uniform limestone blocks, which are not the same colour as those found in the upper portion of the keep. This base has recently

been re-mortared to try to prevent moisture from being absorbed into both the keep and the adjoining church of St Mercurius (**Fig 7.23**). The ancient walls are being covered with a yellowish plaster, at the time of my visit only half of one wall been covered, although the idea was to cover the whole keep. The garden originally abutted against the lower courses of the keep; it was thought that possibly the moisture from the soil was being absorbed by the brickwork and damaging the church walls, therefore during the consolidation work by ARCE the garden was moved back a few metres and the foundations were exposed.

Fig 7.22: Southern wall of the Keep

Fig 7.23: Foundations of the Keep

To enter the keep one must cross a wooden drawbridge which is situated on the second floor of the keep (**Fig 7.26**). The drawbridge is evidently very old, it comprises two planks of wood, of which the left one has split. Iron nails keep the boards together, while modern wooden rails allow safe passage across without falling off. Entry into the keep brings any visitor onto the second floor. It is obvious that the keep is not meant to be viewed by the public by its dishevelled appearance; the first and second floor are currently being utilised as storerooms and currently contain petrol drums, plastic containers and old pieces of carpet. The walls have recently been re-plastered, although not to a high standard. The plastering is often shoddy and has dripped over some of the wooden door lintels, making the overall aesthetic look unsightly (**Fig 7.24**). A few of the storerooms evidence wooden support beams for the upper floor, which have been plastered around in a haphazard fashion which does not fit in with the new coat of modern plaster. Modern wires and bare light bulbs have been fixed to wooden lintels and onto walls; these are not in keeping with the aesthetic of the building, nor do they look particularly safe. The fourth floor contains the Chapel of the Virgin Mary; a painting of the Virgin Mary has been painted onto the external wall (**Fig 7.25**). The use of western-style paintings is prevalent in all of the

churches I have looked at, and for the most part, Coptic iconography tends to be downgraded; this of course has an impact on the authenticity of the building. The chapel walls are bare and have not been plastered over in the same manner as the rest of the keep, although there are remnants of a previous attempt to re-mortar the stones.

The keep holds a local significance to the Copts; the priests and monks still use the chapels within the keep to pray and these have been in use since the 5th century; it is therefore a deeply historical place and one where the clergy clearly have a spiritual connection to. Any remedial or consolidation work performed here should be non-invasive and enacted following all UNESCO guidelines such as minimal intervention. While the clergy have a spiritual connection to the chapels inside the keep, the actual building is a rare example of monastic defences in Egypt. There are a few examples in the Wadi Natrun area (such as the monastery of St Macarius), and the nearby monastery of St Antony contains one, there are relatively few across Egypt. Its rarity is therefore one of the important factors in deciding its level of significance. Although visitors may not feel a spiritual connection with the keep, its value as a historical example of early medieval Coptic architecture is without doubt.

Figure 7.24: Lintel of a storeroom doorway within the Keep.

Figure 7.25: Outside wall of the Chapel of St Mary in the keep

Figure 7.26: Drawbridge leading into the Keep

Refectory

The refectory is a rectangular building, situated adjacent to the church of St Mercurius. The internal brickwork is consistent with the 18th-century stonework found in the mill and pharmacy. Built into the walls are niches which hold pots, their original function may have been to hold a light source such as lamps or candles. The roof is rounded, creating an arched shape to the room, while the floor is made up from limestone paving slabs. At the centre of the room is a long, stone table, upon which are a multitude of drinking vessels (**Fig 7.27**). Some of these date to the 18th-century and their placement serves as a museum of sorts displaying these vessels. The refectory, much like the mill was constructed in the 18th-century and as such is a significant addition to the monastery and indicates a building phase in the 18th-century, although it is possible that it was built on the foundations of an earlier refectory (Walters 1974: 100). As previously discussed, the 18th-century buildings should not be automatically dismissed as less important or significant; they indicate a phase of considerable construction at the monastery, significance in Egypt often means the Pharaonic, Roman or Islamic periods, yet the refectory was built relatively recently. Even though the refectory is 300 years old, this does not make it any less significant to the Copts, or visiting Pilgrims.

Figure 7.27: The refectory

Church of St Mercurius and The Cave Church of St Paul.

The church is three metres below the floor level of the monastery (Capuani 2002:168) and combines three stages of development which explains the 'odd' shape as Massimo Capuani posits (Capuani 2002: 168). The original Cave church as noted already is believed to date to the 4th-century; it was expanded in the 13th-century with a rock cut nave, narthex and a domed Haikel. The final period of extension was in the 18th-century when the three domed chapels were added to the north of the church (Jones 2008b: 134). The church is quite unique in its floor plan due to the incorporation of the cave church into a larger structure. The original part of the 4th-century cave now consists of a small squared nave which contains a cenotaph to St Paul and a slim corridor which leads to the Church of St Mercurius. During the 13th-century the squared central nave was carved from the rock and the underground corridor which leads to the Church of St Mercurius was formed. The 18th-century additions are the three chapel rooms to the north which have domed roofs over them (Lyster 1999: 42).

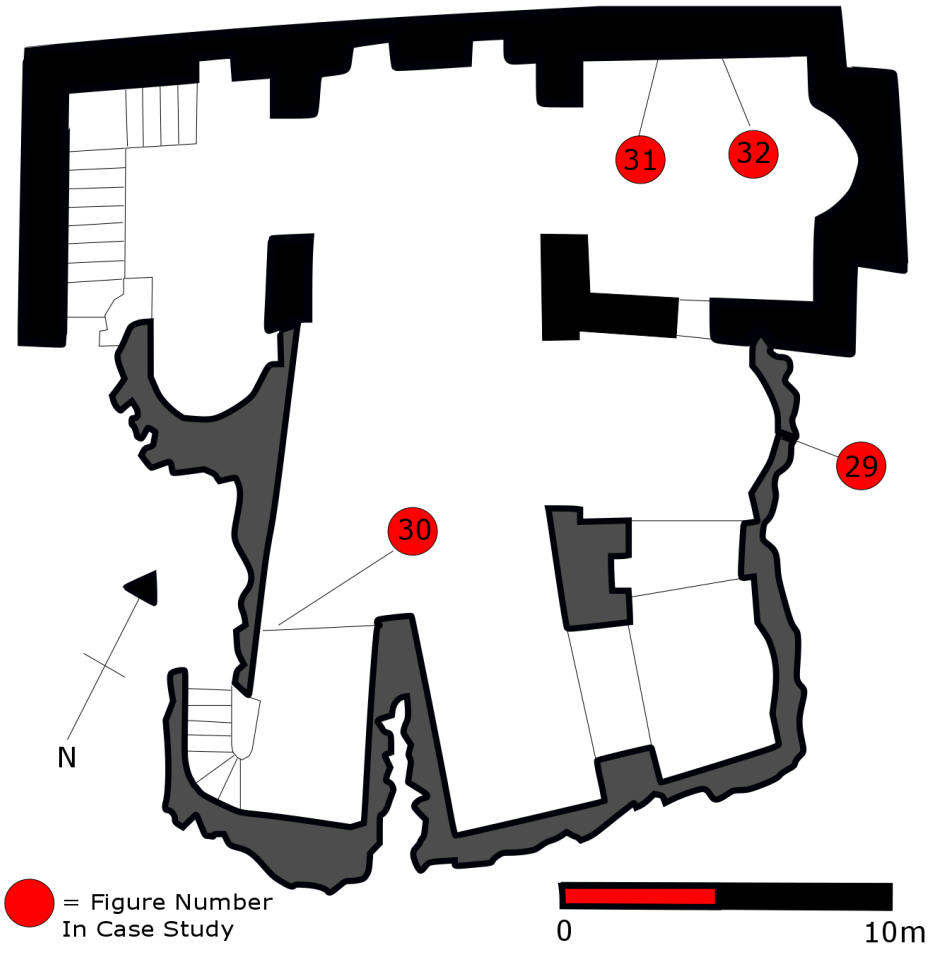

Fig 7.28: Plan of the Cave Church of St Mercurius (Capuani 2002: 168).

The cave church of St Paul and the wall paintings are arguably the most significant and important archaeological features within the monastery (**Figs 7.29 and 7.30**). The Cave Church is itself a highly religious place for both local Copts and pilgrims to come and pray and is the cave hermitage that Paul and Antony were said to have discoursed in. The highly spiritual and revered nature of the cave has meant that significant additions have been made to the cave since the 4th-century, therefore it displays a diverse typology of wall paintings. An array of wall paintings dating up to the 13th-century have been painted upon the walls -and over each other-, these are extremely rare with similar examples of paintings found at the monastery of St Antony. Their rarity and the information gained from their painting style (allowing a typology to be created) combined with their importance to both the local Copts and wider Christian community make these paintings highly significant.

Fig 7.29: Wall painting of Virgin Mary, the Christ Child and an Angel in haikal of St Antony, Cave Church of St Paul.

Fig 7.30: Wall painting of Virgin and Christ Child with Cherubum in Cave church of St Paul.

Fig 7.31: Plaster thatis bubbling in the north-western sanctuary

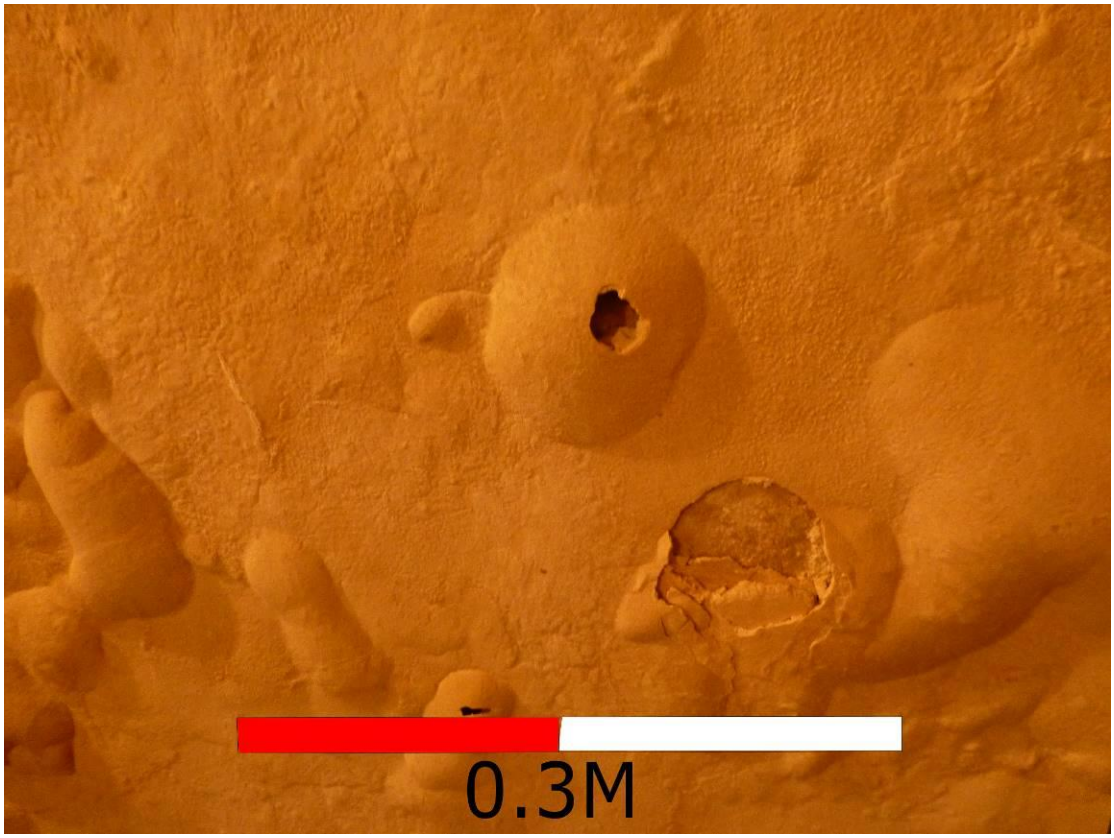

Fig 7.32: Close up view of the bubbling of plaster in the Cave Church of St Mercurius.

7.3 Assessment of Significance

The Monastery of St Paul is one of the most well preserved living Coptic monasteries in Egypt. The monastery has undergone a natural evolution in its structure since its creation in the early 4th-century, from a small cave church to a multi-building Pachomian settlement, to a walled monastery. Both the monastery of St Paul and St Antony are the only surviving Christian monasteries in the eastern desert; there are other desert monasteries across Egypt, particularly in the Wadi Natrun area in northern Egypt, but these monasteries are particularly rare in this region of Egypt. The monastery has a rich history of early Pachomian monasticism and can be grouped with other monastic sites such as Nitria, Scetis and Kellia as the earliest examples of group monasticism in Egypt. Its role is important as it provides a tangible link to these early monks and Saint Paul, and unlike Kellia and Nitria, it is still in use today.

The monastery provides archaeological potential for the evolution of monasticism in the 4th-century and would benefit from future archaeological works where possible. Importantly, it provides the archaeological potential to record the

evolution of the early monastery from a single cave church to a walled monastery and will provide data that can be compared against other surviving examples such as Kellia and Nitria to determine whether these settlements developed in the same manner and during the same timeframe. Architecturally, the monastery displays examples of potentially early medieval defensive walls, a 10-11th-century keep and 18th-century buildings such as the mill, refectory and church of St Michael. These are important as their continued survival allows heritage specialists to compare these architectural elements against others, both currently standing (for example in the Wadi Natrun there are numerous examples of keeps still surviving) and against those which are yet to be discovered. There is an obvious local significance to the Coptic Christians who travel from the surrounding area to pray at the monastery, but arguably a much wider global significance to both the cave church and spring of St Paul; both are linked to the myth of the Christian saint and are held in reverence by a cross section of Christians, including Orthodox and Catholic denominations. Many Christians will travel specifically to visit the monastery to see the cave church where St Paul and St Antony entered into discourse.

7.4 Mitigation of the threats

Management Issues

Currently the monastery is owned by the Coptic Church, but any conservative work must be approved by the Ministry of Antiquities. Any funding must come from the Coptic Church to conserve or improve any historic buildings as demanded by the 1983 law 117, Article 30. The monastery is managed on a day to day basis by the Bishop, priests and monks who live there, any conservation work should be completed by a Ministry of Antiquities approved conservation team. This dual approach to management can present its own set of challenges; the monks often want to fix small structural problems themselves and in doing so, sometimes damage the historic fabric. The Ministry of Antiquities should be involved with any conservation efforts and if they are not informed or involved this can create tension between the Ministry and the monks at the monastery. This tension between heritage experts and the actual stakeholders is a sadly familiar theme in the issue of Coptic sites management.

Previous Conservation work

The Monastery of St Paul has been fortunate enough to have had significant conservative action undertaken on the Mill, Refectory, and the Cave Church by the non-governmental organisation, The American Research Centre in Egypt (ARCE). Using funding from USAID (a monetary fund initially given by US Congress to aid in the rebuilding and consolidation of historic structures after the sizeable earthquake in Cairo in 1992), the Antiquities Development Project was created to conserve the Monasteries of St Paul, St Antony and Quseir (Scott 2008: XI). The first phase of the conservation project at the Monastery of St Paul began on the 2nd December 1997, starting with the consolidation and restoration of the mill. The restoration of the mill and the subsequent removal of the roofing materials gave ARCE an excellent opportunity to gain knowledge as to the initial build date and the subsequent repairs and extensions that have been built over the centuries. Michael Jones offers a tentative date of an original build date during 1703-05; he believes that the stone walls were the building material used during this period. He notes the building was rebuilt and renovated during the late 18th-century; inscriptions on the hopper and wooden beams mention Ibrahim Jawhari, who restored the Cave Church in 1780/1; this seems a logical assumption to make. A point he raises is the apparent destruction of the stone walls and rebuild using mud brick within only 70 years, a limited period of use.

The eastern room needed minimal restoration; the walls and floor were cleaned and excess electrical wires were removed. The roof in the western room was replaced; the current roof was built during the 1980's. It consisted of wooden planks resting upon steel girders which created a twofold problem. Firstly, it was too heavy for the mud brick walls on which it rested and secondly it was not in keeping with the character of the building (Jones 2008b: 133). It was removed and a new one was erected using local materials. A plastic sheet was inserted between the layers of roofing material to stop rain water from seeping in and causing more damage. The passage between the two rooms was re-plastered and old cement patches used for previous repair jobs was removed. The refectory was the second building to receive consolidative efforts in 1997-1998. Consolidation consisted of repairing the largest cracks in the ceiling by filling them with a compatible grout. Michael Jones reports that there were many smaller fissures and one large crack on the ceiling; the largest was investigated by a structural engineer and deemed to not at risk of causing collapse.

Excess electrical wires were removed from the walls and a new lighting system was installed; wires were buried beneath the earthen floor and connected to lights fitted onto the floor. New paving slabs were laid over the earth floor. It is important to stress that minimal intervention was adhered to at all times during this project, something not always seen in other restorative projects in Egypt.

The cave church of St Paul was the focal point of an extensive campaign of restoration between 2001 and 2005. Conservation began in 2001 with a structural survey; it was performed to determine the extent of damage wrought throughout the centuries of neglect and to allow ARCE to plan how they would perform the necessary repairs. The survey revealed cracks across the centres of the domes and archways to the north of the church and another large crack was discovered on the eastern dome which continued onto the eastern wall of the Haikal of St Antony. Heavy salt efflorescence was found, indicating a problem with an abundance of moisture within the cave church. This led to a weakening of the walls and subsidence (Jones 2008b: 135). During 1966 and 1971, the church was badly flooded which subsequently caused the plaster on the walls to crumble away; the monks in response covered the walls in a layer of Portland cement on the floors and walls just beneath the wall paintings (Jones 2008b: 135). This has the negative affect of trapping the moisture in the walls and caused salt efflorescence to form on the wall paintings higher up (Jones 2008b: 135). Between 2002 and 2005 the large crack in the eastern dome was filled with grout and the paintings were cleaned and conserved.

The Haikal of St Antony was reportedly more difficult to clean due to the wall paintings being covered in a layer of lead based paint. To correct these problems ARCE instigated a project to clean and restore these wall paintings and to consolidate the church between 2001-5. During 2001, recording began with a photographic and architectural survey; this would continue until 2005 and was a way of documenting both the process of the conservation and a way of performing much needed and important research into the wall paintings. In addition, the exterior of the roof was reinforced by wooden buttresses and the cement rendering was removed and replaced with a compatible lime mortar which was sloped to direct rainwater to guttering (Jones 2008b: 138).

Outside of the church, interventions were attempted to stop the moisture problem in the church; the garden was cut back to allow access to the lower courses of the keep and church. When the soil was removed an 18th-century drain and a rubble core abutting the lower walls made with cement was discovered. As part of the attempt to stem the water infiltration problem in the walls of the church and keep and to prevent any further flooding during periods of flash floods and storms, a four-metre-wide channel was excavated to natural ground and lined with red bricks and a storm drain was installed (Jones 2008b: 137); all of these interventions were in keeping with the overall aesthetic of the keep and church. Aside from the ARCE interventions, in 2012 the Ministry of Antiquities authorised conservators to plaster over the defensive walls; early into this project it was deemed a failure by the priests who believed that the conservator was not suitably qualified and the aesthetic that he was attempting did not suit the stonework this conservative work was stopped (Father Arsenios 2012: Pers. Comm).

Current conservative issues at the monastery

Since the ARCE conservation project concluded in 2005, new conservative issues have become apparent. The cleaning and restorative efforts by ARCE were a success; the wall paintings have been cleaned and retouched to a high standard and the black soot which obscured them has been removed. The wall paintings can now be enjoyed by visitors and have retained their authenticity and significance. Since ARCE finished their conservation work, a new emerging problem is the warping and bubbling of the plaster in the northern chapels (**Figs 7.31 and 7.32**). If this problem is left untreated, the wall paintings will be at severe risk of being damaged and possibly lost forever. Although the project in 2005 attempted to deal with the moisture issue in the church, it has not been completely solved and the problem may be part of a larger rising water table issue prevalent in Egypt. Another survey is required to ascertain where the water is coming from and if found to be the high-water table, another solution must be sought; in the long term, a pump system as used at Abu Mina and at Haret Zuwaila might be one such viable solution, although this will require significantly more investment by the Copts and the Ministry of Antiquities.

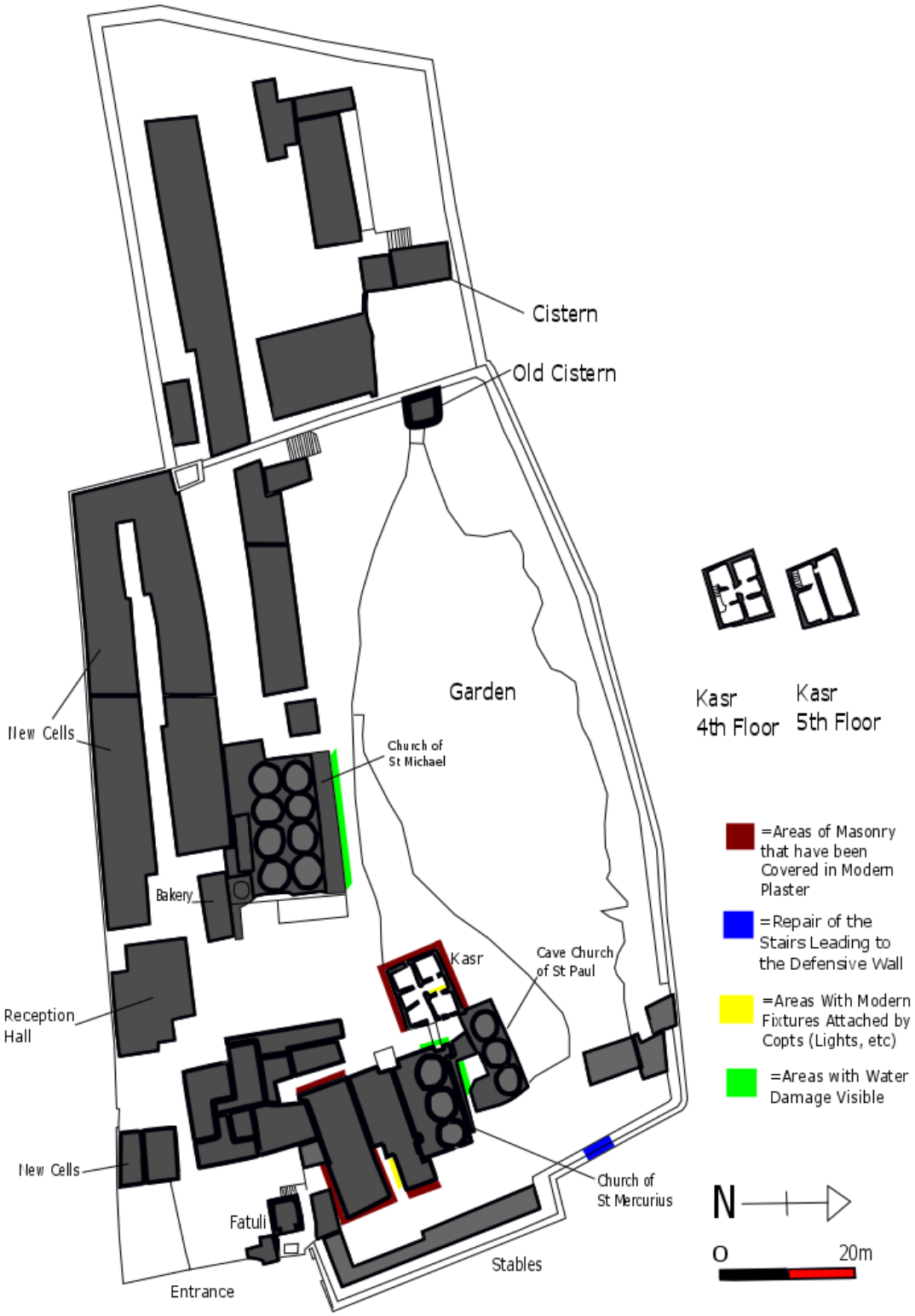

Fig 7.33: Plan which details issues at the monastery.

The re-plastering of the walls by a Supreme Council of Antiquities contractor has left some of the defensive walls with poorly presented plastered walls, and it is

currently unknown if the damage is reversible. This seems to be part of a larger push by the Copts to plaster over many of their external walls in a potentially misguided attempt to protect them from damage and to increase their aesthetic quality. Luckily, the priests at the monastery stopped the contractor before he could do more damage. Aside from the external walls, smaller patches of thicker plaster were applied to the northern defensive wall, to the external eastern wall of the Church of St Mercurius, and to the lower courses of the keep. The external walls of the mill were also in the process of being plastered over, which completely obscured the original stone walls. These attempts to cover over the original stone masonry are misguided, by covering the historic fabric, they are negatively impacting upon the aesthetic beauty of the ancient monastery and are reducing the significance an authenticity of the Roman and 18th-century walls. It is recommended that the plaster is removed, although tests would need to be performed to check that this removal process would not damage the masonry beneath.

7.5 Tourism Impacts

Currently the monastery is a well-visited tourist venue; both local parishioners and western tourists visit the monastery on a regular basis although as noted at the head of the chapter the signage and interpretation does not encourage engagement from non-Arabic speakers. The focus of the monastery should not be to solely accommodate western tourist needs; it is not a tourist attraction such as the Sphinx or Pyramids at Giza, rather it is a living ancient monastery which still supports the needs of the local community. Any type of tourism must be integrated in a non-intrusive manner to the local community and should not visually intrude upon the aesthetic of the monastery. At the present moment, there are a number of issues which could improve both visitor and local experiences at the monastery.

The monastery is currently in a state of disrepair; many areas are particularly dirty, with rubbish strewn across the floor and along staircases. A practical strategy would be to have a system of cleaning and maintenance at the monastery which could include sweeping any litter away once every few days or every week, the removal of oil drums which are littered across the monastery and making sure that access paths that visitors may take are free from debris; for example, the stairs opposite the pigeon loft have wall debris on them making the stairs look unkempt and damaged. At present,

there is no concerted effort to maintain any part of the monastery except the garden which is tended daily by local Copts. The introduction of aesthetically appropriate litter bins would be advantageous as would small signs in English reminding visitors that this is a place of worship and for them to remain respectful of the monastery and its clergy. There is the potential constraint that there may not be enough volunteers to help maintain the cleanliness of the monastery. After all, this is a remote site and not part of a day to day parochial community. Efforts to encourage a community-based involvement, as suggested at Haret Zuwaila, may not be effective here in what is a closed monastic community with intermittent pilgrim visitors.

The visitor experience is minimal. Currently there is a small modern complex of shops outside the main entrance which sells small Coptic trinkets, snacks, water and fizzy drinks. The food is excellent value for money for western tourists (Pers. Obs) but the Coptic 'trinkets' such as key rings, plastic crucifixes and children's toys are not of a high quality. If the aim is to serve for a western market it would be sensible to display more quality, items such as high-quality, hand carved Coptic Crucifixes, hand painted icons, textiles and well written books in a range of languages, these could be sold alongside the cheaper tourist items. The idea would be to increase the revenues of the monastery by selling more quality items that the Coptic Church hand crafts. This is an integral part of many Christian religious sites across the world; a pertinent example is at Buckfast Abbey, Devon where handmade monastic items made by monks in European religious communities (Buckfast.Org ND). In Lalibela, Ethiopia, monastic crafts are a central part of fundraising that provide local people a sustainable business (N Finneran 2016: Pers. Comm).

The small visitor centre which serves visitors to the monastery is currently not fit for purpose, it is a small room with very little on display about the monastery and at present there are no maps or literature about the monastery that visitors can read. One aim should be to produce a printed map that visitors could buy which will offer some history and insight into the different areas of the monastery and in particular the wall paintings of the Cave Church. Currently, visitors will walk aimlessly around the monastery and will not understand what they are looking at; there are no 'official' guides to explain the areas of the monastery. Lone tourists in particular will not understand the history of the monastery and Coptic people without a guide. ARCE's Michael Jones frames the problem by emphasising that members of foreign tourist

groups wish to be put into a significant context by seeing historical monuments and hearing them described with a recognizable narrative (Jones 2008b: 127). Indeed, this is one of the most important aspects of providing a tourist visit and without a well-informed guide or well written literature and maps, foreign visitors will not be able to engage with the history of the monastery or embrace the culture in any meaningful way. Those who have travelled for a spiritual experience such as Orthodox Christians may well, have a significant experience by praying in one of the Churches, but only by understanding the history and context of its setting will they be able to gain a full experience.

7.6 Conclusion

This case study has attempted to provide a reappraisal of the works completed by The American Research Centre in Egypt, to examine and evaluate areas of the monastery that were not included in ARCE's original project and to provide an outline for a conservation plan that addresses any problems encountered. The monastery of St Paul is not only an important Coptic heritage site, it is also an extremely important site in the development of early Christian monasticism and should be viewed alongside, the monastery of St Antony, Kellia and Nitria as a core group of early monastic archaeological and heritage sites that are not only locally important, but hold a global significance to Christianity across the globe. Monasticism's evolution from asceticism to cenobitic can be traced back to this monastery -alongside the handful of aforementioned other sites-, and its spread from Egypt to other nearby countries such as Syria and its later influence upon other communal monasticism such as Benedictine should be viewed as an extremely significant part of Christian history.

Although the monastery has its origins in cenobitic or 'Pachomian' monasticism, it is also a multi-phase monastery with c. 1700 years' worth of continual habitation; it bears witness to the continuity of Coptic material culture and belief. Any future archaeological excavations or conservation projects that remove historic material will continue to add to our knowledge of the formation of the monastery. The management of the monastery, and one may argue at nearly all Coptic heritage sites, is particularly difficult due to the conflict between the Ministry of Antiquities and the Coptic laity who live at the monastery. The MOA and the Copts need to work together to tackle the various issues that have been raised in this conservation plan. Often the

monks do not wish to include the MOA in any repair work; often small additions are completed without approval such as the installation of lights where the historic fabric is damaged. They view these small repairs or modifications as unimportant and not needing any kind of discussion with the MOA, yet they are in some cases adding potentially incompatible materials such as Portland cement to limestone which may affect the integrity of these structures at a later date. Large scale projects to repair the mill and refectory were completed with both stakeholders participating in open discourse and employing a competent sub-contractor to complete the work (ARCE). Unfortunately, this has not always been the case; the painting of the defensive walls with a thin plaster was enacted under the guidance of the MOA but clearly was not undertaken by a suitable conservation professional. Luckily the monks realised that the plastering was not of a high quality and stopped him before too much of the walls were covered. It is incidents such as this which breed mistrust between the two stakeholders, with the Copts perhaps more reticent to engage the MOA with further repairs. It is clear that when both parties engage with one another, projects to repair and consolidate structures at the monastery can be completed to a high standard.

An important aspect of the monastery is its dual role as both a heritage site and as a pilgrimage site; it is important to consider that it has a duality in its meaning and value and this will depend upon who is visiting the monastery. As discussed in chapter 5, motivations for different types of visitor are complex. Some Christians may visit for spiritual reasons, either on a personal pilgrimage or perhaps they wish to visit a historically significant Christian monastic site from the 4th-century. These visitors may have an emotional connection to the monastery or its sacred spaces such as the Cave Church or even the sacred spring where a historical holy figure drank from. Conversely, non-Christian visitors may want to visit due to having an interest in history or architecture, and of course many visitors will have no prior knowledge of the site and may have only visited because it was offered as a day trip from a nearby tourist resort such as Hurgada. Both of these types of visitors will have no emotional attachment to the site. The last group of visitors are local Coptic Christians, who much like the other Christian visitors on pilgrimage, have a strong emotional connection to the monastery; they view it as a direct link to their heritage and to one of their most revered saints. The monastery holds a much more emotional value to them than the other types of visitors, and one may hold their emotional value of the monastery to be as high as the laity who live at the site. It should be made clear that while significance and value of

the monastery differs between western visitors and Copts, it is not solely a heritage site, it is a living, working monastery and as such it should not be treated as a tourist attraction such as the Sphinx or the tombs at Luxor. Any proposals made via a tourist plan must treat the site with utmost respect and aim to be as non-intrusive as possible to the daily lives of those who pray and live there. Of course, there are means of improving the current visitor experience and authenticity of the site, which is currently an issue that is raised in this plan.

Currently the visitor experience, while adequate, could be developed into a much more authentic and lucrative attraction towards visitors (and in particular western tourists). The primary problem that has become apparent is the lack of a tourism plan, this leads to an anarchic style of management which has resulted in a number of problems at the monastery which may put-off visitors or impact upon their experience. For example, the monastery does not appear to have any kind of scheduled collection of waste, nor any kind of active response to litter that accumulates at the monastery. This has led to the accumulation of discarded food wrappers, broken pieces of metal and other miscellaneous rubbish to build up across the monastery. The problem is compounded by parts of the monastery that have become damaged and in need of repair such as the stairs near the northern wall. Both of these problems combined have left the monastery appearing dirty, damaged and tarnish the overall experience for visitors, whether they are pilgrims or not.

The overall appearance of the monastery is not the only tourism issue that needs to be addressed. Currently there is only a small tourism office with one monk allocated to provide assistance and this needs to be addressed. There are no plans of the monastery for sale, this would be very easy to create and would give visitors an overview of the various buildings contained within the monastery walls. Audio wands have been used at other heritage sites successfully but would not be appropriate here, due to the site being a place of worship, not a pure tourist attraction, but a short guide could be written to provide context, dates of construction and information of each building; this would not be invasive nor inappropriate to the local Copts. The use of signs could be maximised to good effect, currently there are no English signs anywhere in the monastery but if used sparingly could aid visitors without being obstructive.

Coinciding with an improvement of the overall aesthetic of the monastery

should be a move to sell authentic Coptic merchandise. At present the shop sells very cheaply made toys, often not made within Egypt, plastic crucifixes and poorly made jewellery. There is a market for better quality, Coptic produced items such as carved wooden crucifixes, hand woven textiles, and hand painted icons. Rather than take home a memento of their visit that was mass produced in a factory, they would be contributing back into the local Coptic community and helping to maintain and repair the monastery, and also their experience would feel more authentic. As discussed, the site does have a number of issues which need to be addressed in the future, but there are a few areas in which the management of the site is working well. While there are key areas of concern regarding the overall tidiness of the site, areas are well maintained, for example the central garden is tended to regularly and is aesthetically pleasing. The church of St Mercurius has undergone recent conservation efforts and now provides locals and visitors the ability to view original historic wall paintings. The overall experience is satisfying with those on pilgrimage able to pray with locals and monks, thus offering an authentic experience. The spring from where the monastery used to source its water from is an impressive site for visitors and provides an authentic, tangible link to St Paul.

Looking forward, the monastery needs to address its current issues; some of these can be dealt with internally, with a robust tourism plan such as the increased maintenance of removal of litter. Other problems are far more difficult to deal with and require a multi-stakeholder approach and the involvement of the government. The high-water table which is damaging the walls in the Cave Church cannot be solved by the Copts alone, it needs the help of the government to lower the water table around the local area. The most pervasive and contentious issue that should be addressed is the improper additions and maintenance of the monastery, while well meaning, the monks are actually damaging the historic fabric and any additions such as lighting should be enacted in consultation with the MOA. Having examined a monastic site, now our attention is focused upon the next case study: the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Abu Mina which again presents a different set of heritage management problems and issues.

Chapter 8: The UNESCO World Heritage Site of Abu Mina

8.1 Location

In contrast to the previous case study, this case study will focus upon a site which has no modern ritual role, and is managed in a different manner, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The implications of this level of international management were discussed above on pages 48-50 in chapter 2. This case study has been chosen because it is a sufficiently different type of heritage site to those previously examined in chapters 6 and 7. Previous case studies were living heritage sites that are still used by both the Coptic laity and clergy, and were managed by the Coptic Church with conservation overseen by the Ministry of Antiquities. Abu Mina is a ruinous or 'dead' heritage site and although it used occasionally by local Coptic laity to pray (albeit illegally and unsanctioned by the Ministry of Antiquities), it is not open to the public at the moment. An added layer of management from its placement on the UNESCO World Heritage List, means that there is an extra layer of policy, forming a triumvirate of vested parties; UNESCO, The Ministry of State for Antiquities and the Coptic Church.

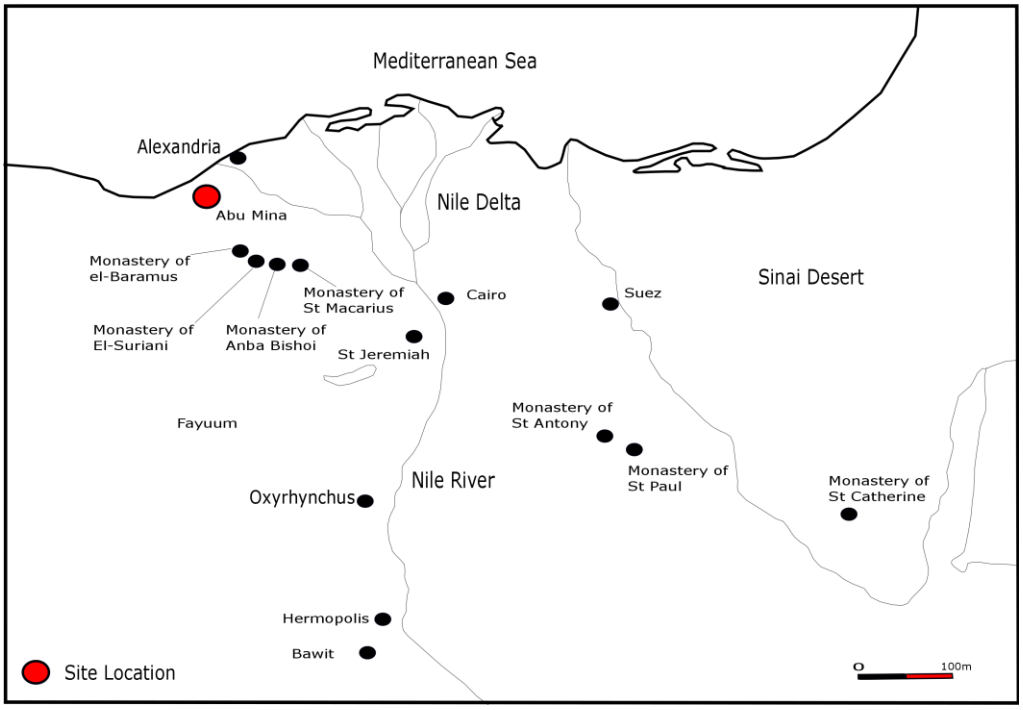

Fig 8.1: Map of Lower Egypt (Based upon Finneran 2010: 10)

The site of Abu Mina is located in the Maryut (or Mareotis) region in Upper Egypt, 48km south-west of Alexandria (Grossmann 1991: 24) (**Fig 8.1**). The Mareotis region is historically an area of intensively cultivated and irrigated land, (Haas 1993: 234), which was provided with fertile agricultural soil by the nearby Lake Mareotis (now Maryut) which was linked to the Nile river by two canals (Petruso and Gabel 1983: 62). The local geology of the area is a basin covered with loamy sandy soil and locally low lying deposits of sandy limestone (Kila, Sadek, Salem and Rashed 2008: 1084). The site is situated near to the city of Alexandria, which in the 4th-century was perhaps the second largest city in the Roman Empire (Haas 1993: 234) and one of the busiest port towns Marea (Petruso and Gabel 1983: 62). It is this proximity to these two important and large cultural centres which enabled Abu Mina to grow and thrive as a relatively accessible pilgrimage centre to European Mediterranean Christian consumers. It is also important to stress that an international pilgrimage site such as this also has different implications for its archaeological recognition than, say, a parochial church such as Haret Zuwaila. The emphasis has to be on the analysis of a regional scale; the effects of a pilgrimage centre are far reaching. This is a region rich in historic remains.

8.2 Historical background to the site and description of the church complex

The focus of this case study is the ruins of the 4th-century town of Abu Mina, a heavily visited pilgrimage site, renowned across the Roman Empire for its healing water. The myth of St Menas is recorded in a Coptic Manuscript found at Hamouli in the Fayum (Ward Perkins 1949: 31), translated in 1946 by linguist James Drescher, the manuscript contained three parts; *The Martyrdom of St Menas*, *The Miracle of St Menas* and *The Encomium of St Menas.* These relate the legend of St Menas and have been dated to c. 893. The manuscript records that he was originally a soldier in the Roman army during the reign of Diocletian (284-305) who joined a regiment stationed in Cotiaeum in Asia Minor. When Diocletian issued an edict for all subjects of the empire to venerate the Pagan Gods he was unable to repent his faith and fearing for his life he fled into the desert (Drescher 1946: 102). It was during a festival of games that he returned from exile, entering into the games arena and confronting the governor Pyrrhus; he professed his love for Jesus Christ in front of the governor (Meinardius 1992: 168) and was taken away to be tortured. The governor Pyrrhus gave him many chances to repent his Christianity, yet he refused, even under torture and duress, and was

therefore executed. A Christian soldier by the name of Athanasius took his body to Egypt and, as the legend goes, the camel carrying his body refused to go any further when it reached Mareotis (Drescher 1946: 103); his body was buried on this spot (Meinardius 1992: 169). The location of St Menas' grave was unknown until a princess was cured (of an unknown ailment) at his graveside; the emperor Constantine subsequently erected a small 'church' over this spot (Evetts 1969: 103).

The archaeological evidence supports the theory that the martyr tomb was either discovered or re-discovered in the mid-late 4th-century. Although some scholars have claimed a small oratory was built over the martyr tomb during the reign of Constantine I (306-337) (Meinardius 1992: 170), the earliest archaeological evidence at the site is the martyr tomb which lay within a *hypogeum* (burial chamber) which archaeologist Peter Grossmann has dated to the late 4th-century (Grossmann 1998: 282). At ground level, a small cenotaph would have been visible, which was later surrounded by a mausoleum constructed from mud brick (Grossmann 1998: 282). To the east of the ruins of the Great Basilica are archaeological remains of an earlier mud brick complex of houses which were discovered by Helmut Schlager and Vorlaufiger Bericht between 1961-63 (Grossmann and Kosciuk 1989: 66). Clearly the cult of St Menas had yet to really flourish, but by the early 4th-century a very small village had sprung up around the periphery of the tomb; this suggests there may have been relatively few pilgrims during this period, as there was no need to house hundreds or thousands of pilgrims in separate dormitories as seen in the 5th-century, and indeed, there were no churches built over the shrine in this period.

The first church to be constructed at the shrine was partially built over the *hypogeum* in the first half of the 5th-century, its design was typical of the period with two aisles, a central nave, pastophoria and apse (Grossmann 1998: 283). Similar designs have been recorded by archaeologists at Kellia, and in Syria, for example the 4th-century 'Eastern Church' at Zebed, Syria is similar in floor plan (Davies 1952: 47). The church was altered numerous times in subsequent years, with a staircase leading to the martyr tomb and the creation of a baptistery towards its western end (Grossmann 1998: 283). During the reign of Justinian (527-565), this original church was replaced with the current Martyr Church; this was not the now standardised basilica church found throughout Egypt, instead it was a design not seen in Egypt, although it was prevalent across Syria; a tetraconch church. The church had a central

plan with four semi-circular apsidal niches, these were not perfectly symmetrical with the eastern and western niches slightly elongated. The sanctuary was situated in the eastern niche and surrounded by screens (*Cancelli*), mounted on marble bases. The design was unlike any other type of church built in Egypt at the time, and no evidence has since been found in Egypt of a similar centrally designed church. It does however resemble designs found in Syria (Grossmann 1998: 284-5), and in Constantinople such as the 6th-century church of Sergius and Bacchus (Davies 1952: 63). In this 4th phase, the tetraconch church was linked to the narthex of the Great Basilica (Meinardius 1992: 170).

The Great Basilica was the largest and grandest church built in the 5th-century (Brooks-Hedstrom 2007: 26) and was designed to house a vast amount of pilgrims. Two different phases of construction have been identified by Peter Grossmann, the earliest phase had two aisles, a nave which spanned 14m in length (Grossmann 1986:12) and a single aisled transept that ended with side chambers at each end. The church ends with what Peter Grossmann describes as a 'broad apse', which would have been covered by a half dome (Grossmann 1986: 12). The second phase enlarged the transept to three aisles and moved the side chambers adjacent the apse (Grossmann 1998: 283). In design, it was a transept style basilica, this differed from the general rectangular shaped basilicas of the 4th and 5th-centuries such as at Antinoopolis, Kellia and Saqqara. Only a handful of churches display the distinct T-shaped building, as opposed to a transept built within the confines of a rectangular building; these were at Hermopolis Magna, Marea and Abu Mina, saliently, these churches were all built within the Mareotis region of Egypt indicating it was a regional design, potentially from a single architect or family of architects. The churches at Marea and Hermopolis Magna, differed from Abu Mina due to the terminal ends of the transept were rounded as opposed to flat at Abu Mina; this distinction makes the Great Basilica unique within Egypt. The quality of the masonry and the use of marble has suggested to scholars that it was built by Imperial craftsmen, rather than local builders (Hedstrom-Brooks 2007: 26), although it was furnished using architectural elements re-appropriated from buildings in Alexandria (Grossmann 1990: 6). It can be considered to be one of the largest and opulent churches built during the period, Robert Milburn considers the ecclesiastical complex to have rivalled St Simeone Stylites in Syria (Milburn 1988: 145) and potentially may have had a legacy of inspiring similar church design further throughout the Empire. For example, the Basilica of the Holy Apostles in

Constantinople may have been modelled on The Great Basilica at Abu Mina (Brooks-Hedstrom 2007: 26).

The construction of the Great Basilica, and the inclusion of a transept aisle must be viewed as a response to the increasing numbers of pilgrims to the Shrine of St Menas, furthermore the need to enlarge the transept a few years later indicates the rate of pilgrims must have been increasing beyond expectations. It is during the late 5th-century when the cult of St Menas really began to flourish, the archaeological evidence clearly demonstrates that the shrine grew from a small mud brick settlement into a large Roman town in under 100 years. The expansion of the town was begun by Zeno (476-491), concurrently with the construction of the Martyr church and was continued by subsequent emperors. Excavations have revealed that, in general, the residential and civil part of the town was situated away from the church complex (Grossmann 1991: 25) to the north of the site. A large Roman bath complex was built to the north-west of the town in conjunction with a peristyle building complex to the south of the baths (Grossmann and Kosciuk 1989: 67) and a large pilgrim's courtyard was built abutting the northern wall of the Martyr church, with guest housing (also known as *Xenodochia*) built against the northern side (Grossmann 1991: 25). Pilgrim's court was surrounded by colonnaded porticoes, with shops directly behind them to the east (Grossmann 1998: 287); the court was the culmination of a long walk down a processional main road that led from the north to the courtyard and was surmounted by shops and storerooms to the east and west. Peter Grossmann realised that it became narrower, the nearer it became to the court, surmising it was to 'raise the tension of the pilgrims' the closer they approached the church (Grossmann 1998: 287).

It is safe to conclude that Abu Mina's identity was intertwined with the act of pilgrimage, the archaeology depicts a clear evolution from a small martyr shrine with a cenotaph, surrounded by a small mud-brick village in the early 4th-century to a large ecclesiastical complex with shops, living quarters, and a Roman garrison for protection by the late 5th-century. It cannot be overstated, that the site was considered a hugely popular pilgrimage site with renown throughout the Roman Empire. Abu Mina was not the only healing shrine in Egypt, let alone Asia Minor; Saints Abbakyros and John at Menouthis, and the shrine of St Thekla in Anatolian Seleukeia (Talbot 2002: 154), were popular healing shrines, and yet Abu Mina and the popularity of St Menas appears to have really resonated with pilgrims across the Roman Empire; he seems to have

enjoyed a reputation as a 'Wonder Worker' (Drescher 1946: XX) evolving from a simple soldier into an accessible object of popular pilgrimage (Woodfin 2006: 117). Evidence of his widespread popularity come in the form of the small ampullae of healing oil that were produced at the shrine, these ampullae were a way of taking home a small amount of healing oil and providing a keepsake from a very spiritual journey, one which may have taken months to complete. These flasks are the most prevalent form of surviving late antique pilgrim artefact (Anderson 2004: 81) and have been found during excavations of a housing complex at the Kom-el-Dikka in Alexandria, which is not surprising given its close proximity to the shrine, but also as far away as Meol, Western England (Anderson 2004: 81). The site's proximity to Alexandria and the port city of Marea, which was believed to have been the main disembarkation point for pilgrims travelling to Abu Mina (Petruson and Gabel 1983: 62) must have aided in its popularity and the construction of a garrison at the shrine by Emperor Zeno proves its importance to Christianity, (and perhaps more likely its importance to the coffers of the Imperial treasury).

We have very few accounts of Abu Mina in later antiquity, we know that it suffered three different attacks, with varying degrees of destruction caused, the first was in 619 by Persian invaders (Ramzy 2004: 95), the second in 628 by Byzantine Emperor Heraclius in response to the Egyptian church not complying with the rulings of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 (Ramzy 2004: 95), and lastly sometime in the 9th-century when roaming nomadic bandits attacked the dwindling town (Grossmann 1998: 298). An entry into *The History of the Coptic Church* relates that the church was still standing in the reign of Pope Shinuda I (859-880) (ed. Burmester II 64). Ward Perkins suggests that the site was not destroyed, rather the area was besieged by bandits which lessened its importance over time (Ward Perkins 1949: 36). This theory is supported by an extract from the Arab Geographer El Bekri, who describes the deserted city of Abu Mina during his journey. He describes the church as still surviving with a domed tabernacle at its centre and a small mosque in one part of the church (El Bekri 1913), but importantly it is not described as a bustling pilgrimage centre anymore; it has fallen into disrepair and is now rather ironically a stopping off point for trading caravans and for Muslims travelling to Mecca. Abu Salih the Armenian describes the site in the late 13th-century, commenting only that St Menas' body was buried in the church at Maryut (Abu Salih 1969: 103). B.T Evetts, who translated the original Arabic text, comments that the town fell into decay before 1376 as it is not

recorded on the revenue lists of this date (Evetts 1969: 103). The texts all point to the conclusion that after the Muslim conquest in the 7th-century, the town fell into a slow decline, until it was abandoned in the 14th-century for good.

It was not until the early 20th century that the site was to be rediscovered; German archaeologist Karl Maria Kauffmann identified the site in 1905 and excavated it for two years between 1905-07. He focused upon the church complex and a number of dwellings to the north, and in doing so unearthed numerous artefacts used in the production of pilgrimage ampullae. He was derided by his peers for the poor quality of excavation and subsequent publication; the eminent Coptologist of the period Ugo Monnerat de Villard is quoted as saying it was 'badly excavated and worse published'; indeed, the final interim report was the only report published at the time (Ward Perkins 1949: 29). In 1936 F.W Deichmann reappraised the site (although did not re-excavate any area) and published his findings in an article titled *Zun de Bauten der Menas-stadt*, refuting Karl Kauffmann's results. Six years later in 1942, the English archaeologist J.M Ward Perkins carried out a walk-over survey and superficial clean of the site, and in doing so re-recorded and reinterpreted the phasing of the site, his work *The Shrine of St Menas in the Maryut* was published in 1949. The German archaeologist Peter Grossmann has been excavating the site since 1961, publishing consistent interim reports, culminating with a two-volume monograph published in 1989, *Abu Mina I: Die Gruftkirche und die Gruft* and *Das Baptisterium von Zabern.* Peter Grossmann published a final study of the site in his magnum opus *Christliche Architektur in Ägypten,* published in 2001.

Since 1979 the site has been afforded World Heritage Status (UNESCO 1979), and has continued to do so up to the present day. In 1992 concern was noted over the site, with a UNESCO monitoring team reporting that illegal construction of a church had occurred at the site (UNESCO 1992); no further reports are available between 1992 and 2001 when the site was placed onto the Heritage at Risk list by UNESCO. It is no coincidence that Peter Grossmann's team of German archaeologists halted excavation at the site in 2001 and no further work has been completed. This is because the water table within the region has become steadily higher due to a large increase in intensive irrigation farming (Grossmann 2004), this has culminated in large bodies of water forming across the site, potentially irreparably damaging foundations of walls and causing unforeseen consequences that are discussed further in this chapter. The

analysis which follows provides a detailed photographic survey of the ecclesiastical complex, pilgrims court and the shops to the north of the Great Basilica and conditions report of these elements as they were in 2013. Given the dearth of good quality monitoring of the sites since the events of the Arab Spring in 2011, this portion of the present thesis has even more significance than the previous case studies.

8.3 Description of the site of Abu Mina

Great Basilica

The Great Basilica is the largest area of the ecclesiastical complex, entry into which can be gained through the pilgrims' court to the north or from the Martyr Church to the west, although there are many low-lying walls which can be stepped over. There are no designated walkways that visitors can follow, which allows many different routes into the church ruins. The overall effect is one of a lack of control of visitor access. This also has knock-on effects for signage and interpretation strategy. This is an important and complex site, itself the centre of a UNESCO WHS. This is clearly the first management issue which needs addressing.

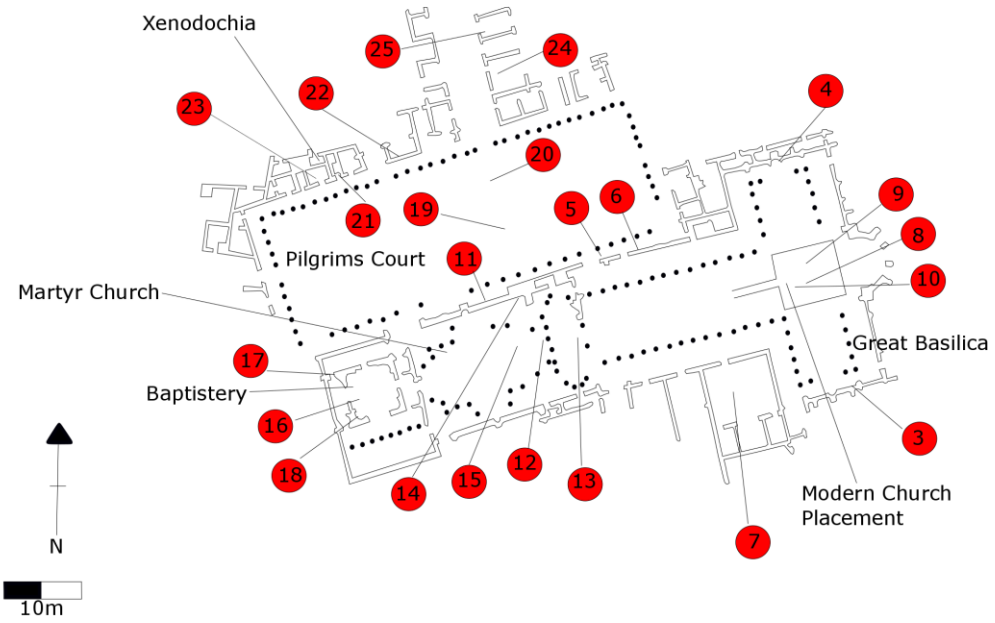

Fig 8.2: Plan adapted from Grossmann (1998).

The first conservation problem is how to deal with damage to the church walls. The walls of the basilica were constructed using cut sandstone blocks and bonded using

a lime mortar; befitting an Imperially-funded church of the 5th-century. They were constructed by some of the best craftsmen and would have originally been covered by marble. When the site was robbed of its marble post-Muslim conquest in the 7th-century, the walls have been left to degrade and are now in a state of disrepair with loss of mortar between the blocks resulting in small to moderate sized voids developing. There are two reasons why the external walls are currently in a poor state of survival. Firstly, sections of the walls have been slowly but continuously eroded by sand flowing in from the surrounding desert (**Fig 8.3**); this is a very slow cause of erosion but insidious in its effects. This slow erosion has caused a linear pattern to form on certain sandstone blocks and a recession in sandstone material. This erosion is clearly an urgent problem which needs to be rectified, and it is one which has been occurring without any intervention since the site was placed on the World Heritage Listing in 1979. The second issue relates to the period of time when the walls and their foundations were submerged beneath large standing bodies of water which had formed due to the high-water table. The water table across the whole Mareotis region is particularly high due to land reclamation projects in the 1950's (Salem, Atwia and El-Honney 2015: 1782), with a 30m rise between 1974 and 2008 (Salem, Atwia and El-Honney 2015: 1796). An ICOMOS monitoring mission in 2005 put forward the idea of installing pumps to lower the water table, discussed in Peter Grossmann's earlier paper (2004), believing this as a credible way to lower the water table by 5 metres and stop the damage to the historic masonry (Benedini and Cleere 2005: 17). Unfortunately, and not foreseen by the specialists, once the high-water table had been reduced and pumped away, salt efflorescence formed on some of the walls (UNESCO 2013). Although the salt efflorescence is not an immediate threat to the integrity of the stonework, if left untreated it can become trapped beneath the surface and cause spalling to occur.

Compounding the aforementioned problems with the walls is a prior attempt to stabilise them by re-mortaring the sandstone blocks; unfortunately, it is not apparent if Portland cement or lime mortar has been used and this needs further tests. The problem with any kind of re-mortaring at this stage is that the problem of salt efflorescence has not been treated and in the future disintegration may occur if more water is reintroduced to the walls. A recent attempt by the local Copts to rebuild these walls has resulted in c. three courses of original stonework (found lying unused across the site) being built upon the original ruinous walls (**Figs 8.3 and 8.4**). These rebuilds

are of a poor quality with mortar liberally coating large portions of the stonework; aesthetically they are poor and obscure the lower courses. Other walls (such as the western and northern walls) have been removed and replaced with modern pre-fabricated blocks (**Figs 8.5 and 8.6**). These stone blocks are not in keeping with the ruinous aesthetic of the site and look like a new build. It should be noted that UNESCO did not authorise any rebuilding of the site and it was undertaken without consent; they are aware of this problem however, and steps are apparently under way to remove these modern reconstructions.

Within the Great Basilica, a temporary 'museum' has been built using wooden planks and old wooden cabinets to display a selection of finds recovered at the site (**Fig 8.7**). These include small Menas ampullae, pieces of broken marble columns and pieces of glass, bricks and tiles. It has obviously been created by the local monks and is designed to be shown off to any visitors who come to the site. It is unfortunately open to the elements and potentially any thieves or tourists who wish to take home a souvenir. These finds need to be housed in a safer environment with a proper display case and need to undergo conservation care before being displayed to the public.

Fig 8.3: Southern wall of the Great Basilica, displaying pieces of broken pillar in the foreground.

Fig 8.4: Entranceway to stairs in the northeastern transept**.**

Fig 8.5: Northern wall of the Great Basilica nave. The upper courses have been reconstructed.

Fig 8.6: Northern Entrance into the Great Basilica. The upper courses of masonry have been reconstructed. Broken pieces of pillars have been laid out in the foreground.

Fig 8.7: The 'museum' within the Great Basilica

Modern Church within the Great Basilica

At the eastern end of the basilica is a modern wooden church that has been built over the remains of where the altar was originally positioned (**Fig 8.8**). The church was originally constructed in 1992 and is built from wood, it is rectangular in shape and is of a sturdy design that is obviously intended to facilitate the needs of the local Copts from the nearby monastery of Mar Mena. Inside the church are the broken bases of four pillars and the altar, which has been encased in a glass cabinet (**Figs 8.9 and 8.10**). An old, thin carpet has been laid across the floor with holes cut out to allow the pillar foundations to sit through. There are notable issues with the erection of this building. Firstly, it has not been authorised by UNESCO, nor the Ministry of Antiquities and is an illegal structure built upon the site. It is not the only illegal building, a number of smaller buildings have been built on the outskirts of the site, but this building in particular occupies an area of sacred ground for the Copts and has become a focal point for pilgrims visiting the site. By building this church in a delicate part of the site, there is a real risk of overloading the ecclesiastical complex, particularly during festivals, damaging the ruins of the church by long term 'rubbing' by visitors and straining this area of the site. The construction of this building and its continued presence has been a contentious issue between the Ministry of Antiquities and the Copts. It is a temporary structure, however and this has perhaps granted the Copts some leeway with the authorities, as no actual historic fabric has been damaged by its erection. The symbolism behind the erection of the church here is clear, so it should not be regarded as being a piece of vandalism, but emphasises the key issue here with the aspect of site management in the Coptic Church: living heritage.

The second problem relates to the altar and pillars that the church surrounds. The altar is currently encased within a glass case. Given the humidity within the building this will cause condensation to build up and be absorbed by the stonework. If the glass case is left over the altar, it could cause excess water to build up in the stone work and cause salt efflorescence to build up, and potentially spalling or disintegration. The general increase in humidity and temperature may in the future also cause issues with the broken pillar bases and is something which needs further study. The construction of the church is really part of a much larger issue of access to the sanctuary for the Copts, who perceive Abu Mina as part of their own heritage and right to pray and congregate at a holy shrine. This is in direct opposition to the stance taken

by the Ministry of Antiquities who view the site as first and foremost as an ancient monument, and are putting its conservation needs as a primary concern. It is this dichotomy in its use that has caused this issue between the two parties and on balance, Abu Mina is both a heritage site and a place which holds a deep spiritual connection to the Coptic Christians, therefore further dialogue between the two parties is needed to provide a solution to this issue.

Fig 8.8: The modern wooden church built over the altar in the Great Basilica.

Fig 8.9: The altar within the modern church. It has been encased within a glass case.

Fig 8.10: Pillar base within the modern church.

Martyr Church

The Martyr church is adjacent to the west of the main basilica, and is connected via a narthex that has been rebuilt using a mixture of reused stone blocks and prefabricated stone bricks that have been distressed to look older and in keeping with the original colour. The walls are comprised of the same building materials as the Great Basilica; sandstone blocks and limestone mortar. The condition of the walls is the same as the Great Basilica, with the majority measuring less than a metre high and of the same bond. It is apparent that the eastern wall was rebuilt to support the new roof over the Great Basilica in 2011 (UNESCO 2011). The remaining walls were not rebuilt as high as the eastern wall, but displayed the same issues as those facing the Great Basilica. Portions of these walls are displaying an advanced level of disintegration and are in urgent need of repair. Sections of the northern walls are suffering from disintegration and spalling, with the fascia of the sandstone blocks fallen away exposing the internal sandstone (**Fig 8.11**). These portions of walls are in an extreme state of degradation and require repair to prevent complete loss of material.

In front of the eastern apse of the Martyr Church is a semi-circular shaft which forms part of the original underground tomb (**Fig 8.12**). It is framed by sandstone blocks, two courses thick. Currently is protected and demarcated by an old iron railing which is damaged and bent out of shape; it is unfit for purpose. Beneath the masonry is a metal girder which is supporting the structure and preventing it from collapsing and it is clearly very old and rusted. The centre of the structure has been backfilled with sand and building debris to prevent further collapse, it is not completely full however, and is untidy in appearance. Stairs which lead down to the underground shrine of St Menas are worn with bricks showing signs of weathering and erosion (**Fig 8.14**). The underground tomb was closed off during the survey due to structural instability, but has been filled partially with sand and debris to minimise collapse if it were to occur. The underground tunnel which leads to the shrine has a rusted metal gate to prevent access (**Fig 8.15**). The walls in the tunnel are in disrepair too with a loss of material apparent, probably caused by its submergence in ground water for an extended period of time. Within the internal limits of the Martyr Church are small brick pier bases and the remains of foundations that are circa one course visible above the floor level. These are not demarcated or protected by barriers or signs and can be walked over by visitors; this is part of the problem with access and visitor routes discussed earlier. A

number of small signpost are lying on the floor within the church, and at one point were used to inform visitors that they are in the Martyr Church.

Fig 8.11: Heavily degraded northern wall of the Martyr Church.

Fig 8.12: Semi Circular shaft which leads to underground *hypogeum*.

Fig 8.13: Reconstructed apse of the Martyr Church.

Fig 8.14: Stairs leading to the underground martyr tomb.

Fig 8.15: Underground tunnel of martyr tomb.

Baptistery

The baptistery is a square building which can be accessed from its eastern entrance by walking through the Martyr Church. Three entranceway lead into the baptistery from the Martyr Church; this is a rectangular building with a square baptistery at its centre. The plunge bath is not visible any more, although the local monks have demarcated where it originally was with stones laid out in a semi-circular pattern (**Fig 8.16**). A small sign written in English has been lain on the floor nearby for visitors to read. The walls of the baptistery are in similar condition to those across the Great Basilica and Martyr Church, although not quite as badly affected by weather conditions and therefore have not degraded as badly (**Figs 8.17 and 8.18**). The walls are higher in stature than those in the other parts of the ecclesiastical complex and display remnants of plaster on them still. To the south are a row of broken marble pillar bases that are currently in good condition. Overall, the baptistery is in a better condition than the Martyr Church and Great Basilica, the walls are not as degraded although do still show signs of salt efflorescence and weather sanding. Therefore, consolidation and repair is needed to prevent any further damage, but efforts to stabilise the Martyr Church and Great Basilica should be targeted first.

Fig 8.16: Centre of baptistery. The monks have outlined where the plunge bath was originally placed.

Fig 8.17: Northwestern wall of the baptistery. The masonry displays degradation from external weather factors.

Fig 8.18: Southwestern wall of the baptistery. The affects of sandblasting can be clearly seen on the stone blocks.

Central Gathering Square

To the north of the Great Basilica and Martyr Church is a large open area where pilgrims and local Christians would congregate before services began. The floor of the gathering square is solely comprised of a dirt surface (**Figs 8.19 and 8.20**). It is probable that at one time there would have been paving slabs lain down, although there is no archaeological evidence left on the surface to suggest this. Circular marble pillar bases are sporadically evident around the periphery of the square, not many remain, however. There is no designated walkway around the central gathering area, with visitors and pilgrims allowed to walk across this area. At the centre of the gathering square is a large pile of broken brick, which appears to have been dumped. There are no signs to let visitors know what area of the town they are entering into, nor are there any walkways to direct visitor flow across a large open area of the site. If this is left unaltered, it is likely that erosion will occur upon the last pieces of original flooring found sporadically across the courtyard.

Adjacent to the central gathering square is a complex of rooms, used for housing local pilgrims (**Fig 8.21**). The walls have been reconstructed recently, using the same prefabricated sandstone blocks that the Great Basilica and Martyr Church were rebuilt with (**Fig 8.23**). The doorways to many of the rooms have been blocked up using loose stone blocks and bricks found from across the site and in some circumstances these doorways have been filled up and used as a foundation to build a new wall on top of them (**Fig 8.22**). One of the northern walls of these rooms have been rebuilt by loosely packing together stone blocks found across site. Its appearance is of an obviously new build and has not been mortared and bonded together professionally. The newly rebuilt walls that have been built upon the original ruins are of a poor quality and although they do reuse some of the original stone work, the mortaring is of a very low quality and obscures much of the stonework. The entrance way into these small rooms is via a single arched doorway. It is built using small hand crafted bricks, bonded using lime mortar. The archway is a shallow U-shaped construction using sideways bonded brick and tile pieces. It is of acceptable quality condition, with some small voids appearing in the bricks; this may be attributed to the high level of water, it may have been absorbed into the brickwork and caused granular disintegration.

Fig 8.19: The central courtyard. Remains of pillars can be seen to the south and east, alongside broken pieces of masonry scattered randomly across the courtyard.

Fig 8.20: Western view of the central courtyard

Fig 8.21: Northern view of the *xenodochia.* The upper courses of the walls have been reconstructed.

Fig 8.22: Internal view of the *xenodochia*. A northern entranceway has been blocked using broken masonry found acroos site.

Fig 8.23: Northern wall of the *xenodochia*. The lower courses have been rebuilt using masonry found across the site. The upper courses are modern replacements.

The Roman Town

The remains of the Roman town are large and expansive so this survey could not deal with the site in its entirety, instead it was decided to target the buildings to the north of the Great Basilica as a select sample; no complete standing buildings remain, although the ruins of the walls were still visible. A linear main street begins at the central gathering area and continues on a northern alignment; on either side of the street are a tightly packed maze of habitations and shops, now reduced to ruins and the eastern and northern ruins are in particularly poor state of conservation. A row of squared rooms is adjacent to the main road leading north (**Fig 8.24**). The foundations for these rooms are four blocks high and built from cut sandstone blocks. Remains of the original plaster are still visible on many of the stone blocks, albeit in small patches. The walls are showing signs of weather damage and the outer layer of the walls are disintegrating and slowly, voids within the stones are becoming apparent. This is due to the harsh weather conditions and the continuous sand being blown across the stonework causing a sanding effect.

It appears that there was an original plan by the Copts to rebuild parts of this building complex using the original loose sandstone blocks (**Fig 8.25**) which were lying unused across site (UNESCO 2013b: 61). At the time of visiting they were laid out within each room, ready for implementation and would have been rebuilt in the same manner and style as the *Xenodochia*. The ruined buildings towards the north of the site have survived in a better condition than many of those close to the Great Basilica, although they too are showing sign of decay and damage. This complex of buildings was built from cut sandstone blocks, bonded with lime mortar much like most of the town. Some of the blocks still have their original fascia, although the majority of the stones have been worn down and are displaying signs of degradation. The damage to these blocks is evident; the corners have been worn down and small holes have appeared across the stonework, indicating that voids within the masonry are appearing and getting larger. Internally these building still have remnants of a stone floor surface. These are cracked and appear sporadically across this complex of buildings. There are no signs or barriers to stop pilgrims and visitors from walking over the floor slabs. The buildings built against the northern wall of the Great Basilica are in a very poor condition. The walls of this building are built from the same sandstone blocks as the Basilica and are heavily damaged. Although ruinous, the walls stand up to five courses

high in places. The walls are showing signs of severe disintegration and weather damage. Lines of horizontal disintegration have formed across much of the stonework, while other blocks have developed small voids where the sandstone has fallen away. On many of the stones small amounts of salt efflorescence is visible indicating that salt crystals have been absorbed by the masonry during the period of high water table. Some of the walls are in extreme danger of complete destruction and without consolidation in the near future will degrade further.

Fig 8.24: Foundations for one of the rooms to the east of the 'processional way'.

Fig 8.25: Foundations for a room to the east of the 'processional way'. Masonry has been placed inside the room in preparation for reconstructing the walls.

8.4 Assessment of Significance

Abu Mina is perhaps one of the most important and well-preserved Coptic heritage sites within Egypt. The site is a 4th-century Roman town with one of the largest basilica churches built in Egypt at its centre; this has undergone numerous alterations over the next three centuries until the Arab Conquest in the 7th-century, and although a great deal of the town and church has been excavated, a great deal more information about 4th-century Roman life and early Christianity can still be recovered from the site. If one is to remove the pilgrimage component from the site, it is still an extremely well preserved example of early Roman life and still has a large area which has not been touched by archaeologists yet. Archaeological evidence suggests that it was a well-established pilgrim centre that catered to the needs of its visitors; artisan workshops and flask moulds have been discovered (Ward-Perkins 1949: 37) which would have been used to create the ampullae of healing oil that have been found across the Roman Empire. This evidence suggests that rather than it being a narrowly functioning pilgrimage healing centre, it was in fact a large scale 'business' which would have increased the Byzantine, and later Coptic revenues. Therefore, its significance lies not only in its role as a pilgrimage centre and Roman town, but also as a well-preserved example of early Christian religious industry. It can be included in the rare group of

surviving ancient pilgrimage sites such as Menouthis in Egypt, and St Symeone Stilites the Elder in Syria (Talbot 2002: 154), but of course its role as a pilgrimage site is not its only significant feature.

Architecturally, the churches at Abu Mina have much to offer scholars and archaeologists, it is an important step in the evolution of church design and contains elements taken not only from other countries such as Syria and Iran, but also provide a connection to the early dynastic temples found across Egypt. The Great Basilica is one of the largest basilica churches in Egypt and is comparable in size to churches in Constantinople. Its design as a transept basilica, is while not unique to Egypt (although it does appear to be a localised phenomenon with the only other known examples at Hermopolis Magna and Marea), it does have a unique shape to its transept ends, which are rounded rather than squared. Therefore, it does have architectural elements that are unique to Egypt and if one uses rarity as part of the criteria for determining significance this should certainly be considered a significant part of Christian architecture. The Martyr Church is a centrally designed church not found anywhere else in Egypt, although this style has been recorded in Syria and Italy (Davies 1952) and could suggest that an Imperial architect had a role in designing it. The ecclesiastical complex should be viewed as an important part of Egyptian church evolution and design and holds important information for researchers in the future when studying syncretism between Egypt, Constantinople and the Levant.

While the site holds a certain significance in its importance to church design evolution and early Roman pilgrimage archaeology, local reverence to St Menas is still very much an important part of Coptic ritual; during the feast of Menas, it has been reported that around 50,000 Copts travel to Abu Mina every year (UNESCO 1992: 3). It should be concluded that although the churches at Abu Mina are destroyed, the site is still considered holy as the burial site of one of their most revered saints. Although the site does not have a global significance to other denominations of Christians in general, it is still a holy site that Christians may visit if it were open to the public in the future, for the same reasons they may visit the monastery of St Paul; to experience a spiritual journey to a holy Christian site. Although lying in ruins, the site is still very much part of the narrative of the Coptic ritual calendar. It is tempting to see an analogue with Glastonbury Abbey in the UK.

8.5 Assessment of current conservation and management measures at the site

Previous Conservation Plans

The foregoing discussion has highlighted the fact that this historic site is in a very poor state of repair and for a UNESCO WHS has a shockingly poor level of interpretation. Much is left to local initiative. How has this situation come about and what plans are in place to monitor the site? UNESCO has previously monitored the site of Abu Mina since its inclusion on the World Heritage Register in 1979. Records of their recommendations only exist since 1992, however. These are the main policy documents set out in chronological order:

1992: In 1992 UNESCO monitors visited the site and provided an assessment of problems afflicting Abu Mina. The report indicated that very few areas of the site were easily identifiable and although the ecclesiastical complex could be identified by tourists, other buildings and areas of site were not obvious and required more identification markers. One of the most important issues identified was the state of the walls; many bricks had been stripped of their protective mortar, allowing water and the elements to degrade the bricks and prior restoration attempts had left many extant remains coated in modern Portland cement which is not compatible with lime mortar, complicating the issue. Any attempt to remove the concrete had resulted in further damage to the stonework and so a new approach was proposed to be developed. The second conservation issue identified was the rising water table caused by an increase in agricultural techniques in the surrounding dessert. If this problem was left it could begin to damage the foundations of the walls. The last issue was the lack of control of visitors and pilgrims, particularly during the Feast of St Menas on 14th November when over 50,000 pilgrims descended upon the site and walked all over the delicate remains. There were no designated footpaths or walkways and pilgrims could walk over and damage parts of the site through continual wear and tear; it was decided that this is an issue which needs to be addressed in the future (UNESO 1992: 3).

1993-1999: No conservation work was enacted from 1993-1999. It is not clear why no monitoring took place at this time.

2000-2001:

Prompted by the increase in water table levels through agricultural land reclamation projects in the surrounding desert (UNESCO 2001) and the potentially irreversible damage to the site, an International Council of Monuments and Sites ICOMOS Expert Mission report was authorised. This was followed by a visit by the UNESCO Chief of the Arab Unit in 2001 and resulted in $7000 USD being given to fund a technical survey of the groundwater problem. The conclusions of the 2001 mission were that the primary danger to the site was the significant rise in the local water table due to a land reclamation programme funded by the World Bank. Trenches have been excavated to try and alleviate the high-water table, to no avail. In addition, large cavities have opened up in the north-west area of the town. The tomb of the saint and the crypt were filled with sand to prevent further collapse (UNESCO 2001).

2003:

In September 2002, a hydrologist carried out an evaluation and offered some technical proposals to lower the water table across the site (UNESCO 2003). His report suggested that it was feasible to install drainage and pump systems across site to reduce the level of water in the ground. He noted that it would only be appropriate to install structural measures such as pumps, if the work was coordinated with a reorganization of agricultural practices and careful planning of land reclamation schemes in the future. It was recommended that a Cultural Resource Planning Unit should be created within the MOA and a programme of monitoring should be set up to co-ordinate this.

2004:

The report for 2004 was relatively minimal. The MOA reported to UNESCO that the groundwater had formed large 'lakes' across the site and that the groundwater had increased once again. To combat this, drainage trenches were deepened to try and deal with the excess water and a report would be sent to UNESCO the following year giving an update (UNESCO 2004).

2005:

Two reports were submitted to UNESCO in 2005; the first being a general summary of the groundwater problem and what has been previously enacted to try and remedy the ground water. Attached was a short paper titled *On the water problems at Abu Mina* by Peter Grossman (2004). Peter Grossman set out two alternatives measures to reduce groundwater; the first was to excavate a series of shafts and tunnels to pump the water away from site, thus lowering the water table between 1 and 2 metres. The second option was to pay compensation to the local farmers to stop all farming and irrigation in the area (Grossmann 2004). A separate letter from the MOA briefly summarized works to be undertaken within the next 3 years, although what these works were to be were not openly published. UNESCO described this as a 'minimal response' to the problem (UNESCO 2005).

2006:

Following the 2005 mission to the site, UNESCO established a list of corrective measures for Abu Mina (UNESCO 2006), the first of which was to carry out a rapid condition survey of all excavated remains and decide upon urgent conservation measures in order to provide protection to structures during the vibration and other forms of damage likely to result from the use of heavy earth-moving equipment. Supporting this should be a geophysical survey over the entire site (including the buffer zone). The problem of the high-water table should be tackled by means of drainage ditches and pipes inside and around the archaeological area; an efficient system for monitoring the water table in the archaeological site and in the surrounding zones should be created; it was estimated that the water table needed to be lowered by 5m and that the first phase of works was to be finished by 2009. As part of the management of the site, the MOA should undertake consultations with stakeholders with the objective of preparing a management plan, to include research, presentation and interpretation, the role of stakeholders (e.g. the Mar Mena community), staffing, sponsorship, visitor facilities, and access. Part of the management plan should include a conservation plan that defined short, medium, and long-term objectives and established technical parameters (materials, techniques, etc), along with establishing the definitive boundaries of the World Heritage site and its buffer zone.

2007:

A *Technical Report on Abu Mina Monastery Site and Underground Water Problems* (2007) by Hassan Fahmy Iman was submitted on behalf of the MOA and outlined what the upcoming conservation plan would include. Conservation efforts would concentrate upon protection of extant and below ground remains and a system to monitor the stability of structures would be created. Supporting these conservation efforts would be a deterioration survey, geotechnical investigations and structural analysis, whilst an architectural documentation system will be set up. A draft restoration plan was submitted which reiterated previously established corrective measures discussed in 2005.

2008:

The State Department issued a letter detailing what current measures were being undertaken to correct and limit the damage being wrought upon Abu Mina. The letter recorded that both short and long term goals had been established (although these have not been identified), structures were being consolidated, the water reduction programme was continuing and scheduled for completion in 2010 and a monitoring system was being put into place. A buffer zone was being designated in conjunction with the Department of Surveying andonce the project has been completed, a fence will be built around the site (including the buffer zone) and will not impact upon the panoramic view. UNESCO record in their report that although the State Department are beginning to mitigate against the threats noted above, their effectiveness is unable to be determined (UNESCO 2008).

2009:

A statement of Outstanding Value (a report to UNESCO which details why the site still fulfils the criteria of outstanding value) was received by UNESCO, but it did not conform to the expectations of the committee. A summary of actions was currently being undertaken and progress at site was submitted; the project to reduce the high-water table by 5m was due to begin with a three-year timeline for implementation (UNESCO 2009).

2010:

In late 2009 a joint ICOMOS/WHC (World Heritage Committee) monitoring mission visited the site. The State Department offered an update on corrective measures; the project to lower groundwater had been completed with a series of shafts and tunnels excavated, and pumps installed to drain away the standing water. A monitoring system was yet to be put into place. A rapid condition survey was established to survey the site, although they have not yet performed the task and the State Department indicates that the final conservation and management plan defining both short and long term goals is nearing completion. The proposed plan of action would determine goals, protection and monitoring of structures during de-watering of site, restoration, conservation and architectural research. A set of differing ideas on how to proceed were shown, ranging from no reconstruction through to complete consolidation and rebuilding the Martyr church. The MOA and Mar Mena community created working groups using national experts; ICOMOS/WHC noted that international experts will be required for certain aspects (UNESCO 2010).

2011-2012:

Due to the political problems and Arab Spring uprising in Egypt, no information was given in 2011 or 2012.

2013:

The 1st phase of the project to lower the groundwater across Abu Mina was completed and considered a success. The standing water across site had been removed and the 'lakes' had been pumped away. The 2nd and 3rd phases which would have seen a much wider agricultural ditch excavated had been abandoned due to the unsustainable cost of maintaining the pumps. A new project to modify the way irrigation is performed by farmers in the area is to be established to keep the water table low. A new problem has emerged with the reduction of the water table. Salt deposition has occurred within the standing remains and has resulted in the loss of building material such as stone and mortar. Underground voids have opened up due to a loss of building material. Between late 2010 and early 2011 a project to dismantle and rebuild the walls of the great basilica was begun. This entailed removal of all original mortar and stone blocks and

replacement with modern stone blocks. The original faces of some of the walls were cut back to line up with the new blocks. UNESCO believe that the aim was to create new walls which would be able to support a new roof over the basilica and were not approved by UNESCO (ICOMOS 2012).

Buildings were built upon the site during this period, including a wooden church over the altar of the main basilica, a pilgrim's rest building and a number of tents. UNESCO noted that these were not sanctioned and need to be removed. It also concluded that appropriate structures should be built for pilgrims and access roads should be built to facilitate this. A conservation survey and boundary survey are still yet to be finalised and put into action. UNESCO noted that the need for this was approaching urgent. A lack of a management plan was considered a major problem still. UNESCO concluded that one which combined protection of the outstanding archaeological remains and management of pilgrims and visitors was urgently required.

2014:

In 2014 some of the latent issues were beginning to be resolved. The condition survey had been funded by the Fondation Arts et Ouvrages (a non-profit organisation that promotes and supports artisitic, cultural and scientific projects), and was currently being written, although there was no time frame for completion. The project to remove the standing ground water was coming to a close, the State Department removed the water pumps and backfilled the shafts. A programme of removal of the new blocks added to the great basilica in 2011 was begun with reconstruction using the original stones commencing. All illegal structures present since 2013 are still present. A management plan has been drafted and signed of by the Director General of Coptic and Islamic Department. UNESCO have noted that it needs further development to provide precise timeframes, costing and objectives. A survey for creation of a buffer zone was begun in 2014 and currently ongoing (UNESCO 2014).

2015:

The Egyptian State Department has provided UNESCO with its current up to date information regarding the state of the site and provided an action plan for the development of Abu Mina. This included a Board of Trustees which been formed from

all relevant stakeholders and the development of a program for short and long term goals is continuing. A number of conservation team to begin conservation upon the ruins, while an Archaeological team has been established to perform a survey upon the ruins. In addition, the establishment of an engineering team to monitor the structural stability of the site and its ruins. A programme to stabilise the soil and build a road which provides access to site was implemented also (UNESCO 2015). At the time of writing this is the state of site management at Abu Mena. For a UNESCO WHS it is a rather thin record of action, and it is surprising that it has taken until 2015 to establish a proactive team of specialists to deal with the problems. One suspects that had this been a pharaonic-period complex with more lucrative tourism potential and global heritage cachet (and perhaps also not a Christian site) effective proactive management strategies would be more forthcoming.

Actions to be Taken

UNESCO have underlined the main problems facing Abu Mina and these shall be discussed further in this section and they will be separated into short and long term goals for the site. It is important to critique here how sustainable and effective they will be, and in addition how they maintain the significance of the site. These actions or issues can be defined under four headings. The first action should be to draw up an effective management plan for the site. Although this case study has highlighted many of the issues which need addressing, only a coherent a management plan can define the main issues and processes. This document should include specialist surveys, costings for any repair work, management of tourism at the site and a system of regular monitoring at the site. At present the Ministry of Antiquities have informed UNESCO that a management plan is forthcoming (UNESCO 2016). The management plan should in the short-term focus upon a condition survey of the whole site (discussed in further detail below) and should authorise specialist surveys to examine ways of stabilising the Martyr tomb, and to determine if there are any underground voids or unsafe areas of the site created by the high water table. Once the condition survey and specialist surveys are completed, a time frame must be completed to enable works to proceed. The short-term goals should be to begin consolidation and repair works on the most vulnerable parts of site and to maintain a low water table so that this does not undo any conservation work.

The next stage should be a full-scale conditions survey of the site. The present study has only just scratched the surface, but has highlighted some of the problems which could be expected. The Ministry of Antiquities have reported that a condition survey was started in 2014 (UNESCO 2014), although there has been no news of a completion date. A condition survey is crucial to the implementation of consolidation work as it allows a full photographic recording of the site to be created and an ability to determine what consolidation techniques are appropriate, and to give an accurate guide to how much it will cost. It is unfortunate that it has taken over two years for a condition survey to be written for the site, this is a survey that is critical in providing a solid foundation for both a management plan and a long-term conservation plan to be written. This case study is limited in scope and only focuses upon the ecclesiastical area of the site, a full condition survey would require a moderate sized team of conservators and would take a few weeks to record fully. UNESCO have reported that in 2014 a team from the University of Alexandria had been hired to perform this role and it has been funded by the Fondation Arts et Ouvrages (UNESCO 2014), however it is mid-2016, and a condition survey still has not occurred. This is the cornerstone of any future decisions regarding the conservation of the site and needs to occur as soon as possible. Again, one must question how high on the list of heritage asset priorities Abu Mina is for the Egyptian authorities.

The next stage is to enact a plan for consolidation of the site. The photographic survey presented above has demonstrated a need for consolidation and repair across much of the site, and in particular, the ecclesiastical buildings to the south. The walls of the Great Basilica, Martyr Church and Baptistery are in dire need of repair and consolidation. The placement of the site in the middle of the desert has left it without protection to the elements. Subtle and slow sand blasting from wind blown sand has worn down many of the sandstone blocks, without the marble that would have at one time protected the interior stone from damage, the blocks are slowly, but surely degrading, with small round voids developing and a striation pattern developing across its axis. Without immediate intervention, this process will continue and result in the complete loss of the masonry. The success of this stage however is contingent upon the single major physical factor affecting the site: the local level water table, an issue which has cropped up several times in the discussion above.

The high-water table and creation of large pools of water across a large percentage of the site is perhaps the most latent and costly conservation issue that has plagued the site of Abu Mina since the late 20th-century. Currently, the 'lakes' that had formed across site have been drained via a series of pumps; these were meant to be removed in 2014 due to the high cost of maintenance and were to be replaced by a government implemented project to change agricultural practices in the immediate area, although it was reported in the news that they were still running in 2015 (Egypt Independent 2015). Currently, the upkeep of the pumps cost around LE3 million per year (Egypt Independent 2015) and have cost LE50 million ($5,631,500; £3,987,500) already to build and sustain. It is therefore imperative that the long-term objective must be for the Department of Agriculture and the Ministry of Antiquities to work together in implementing a change in agricultural techniques so that there is minimal ongoing cost to the government. If this is not forthcoming, then the only recourse of action is to maintain the pumps indefinitely at a cost of LE3m a year. It should be recorded that if the groundwater problem is not rectified, all other conservation activities that are undertaken will fail; removal of salt efflorescence and reconstruction of masonry will fail and ultimately the cost to repair subsequent damage will increase.

These four steps will not be cheap to enact, but they are the minimum interventions required to stabilise the physical condition of this important site. It is worth repeating again that for a UNESCO WHS the standard of management and enaction of global heritage policy is shockingly low. One has to be frank and openly question the motivations of the Egyptian authorities in this matter, but also to stress that UNESCO appears to have taken its eye of the ball as well. Leading on from the issue of physical conservation, we then have the issues regarding site presentation and visitor management.

8.6 Tourism Impacts

The site of Abu Mina is currently closed and off limits to tourists and visitors. During the 1990's until c. 2000, the Feast of St Menas would be held on site on the 14th November, and it was still open to tourists, but with the rise of the water table and with the standing water forming lakes across sites it was closed off to visitors by the then Supreme Council of Antiquities. Monks from the local monastery of Mar Mena

erected a wooden church and they still come to the site (illegally) to pray and hold ceremonies. The site has many problems which need to be addressed before tourism can be reintroduced to Abu Mina, foremost of these is the consolidation and repair of the historic ruins. This is imperative and well overdue to occur, without repair and maintenance, the site can not be opened to tourists as it would be too vulnerable to damage by visitors; even accidental damage and wear and tear can occur over a long period of term. Examples at the Syrian site of Khoros where 'Gouging' (stones are rubbed against the sacred wall causing an indent) occurs may be used (Kristensen 2015: 356) where a religious ritual can damage the heritage site. Obviously, this exact issue would not be a problem, but similarly, pieces of the stonework, or marble may be broken off as a keepsake, or continual rubbing of a piece of stonework would cause just as much damage in the long run.

Once the conservation and repair of the ruins has been completed, tourism needs can be addressed. The motivations of the types of tourist that would be attracted to Abu Mina can be divided into those who have no spiritual link to the site and those that do; unlike the monastery of St Paul, Abu Mina is not a living heritage site, monks do not live at the site, and except for the Feast of St Menas, no open services are held here that visitors can attend. The motivation to attend and pray in a communal, authentic Coptic setting is not therefore a primary motivation. This is not to say there is not a religious or spiritual element to their visit, some Christians may visit to be close to the tomb of a revered Coptic saint. As Jill Kamil has iterated, religious tourism is big business (2000). Other motivations for tourists will be historical; wanting to see a 4th-century Christian church surrounded by a Roman town purely from an interest in history and archaeology, or aesthetic, wanting to view a pretty, ruinous Roman town in an isolated desert setting. At present, however, the site is not being advertised due to the conservation issues that it is undergoing.

To bring the site back up to standard and ready for tourists there are a few issues that need to be addressed. The first problem is a lack of designated walkways around the site. At present, visitors can and will walk wherever they wish, this means that vulnerable areas and choke-points (areas where visitors are funnelled through) such as the northern entranceway into the Great Basilica are at risk of being gradually abraded overtime. Buildings to the north of the ecclesiastical complex still have their original floor tiles present and if these are not protected visitors will walk over them

and slowly wear them down. Therefore, walkways should be installed at Abu Mina which guide visitors around the site; these do not need to be intrusive, and could be covered in sand or painted a colour which fits in with the ground, but tourists need to be guided around and stopped from walking wherever they want.

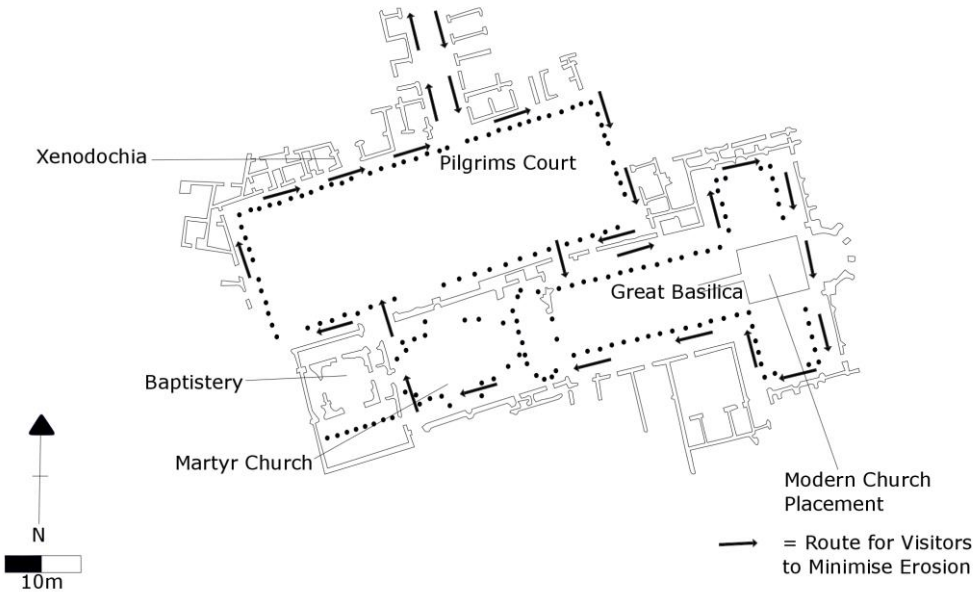

Fig 8.26: Plan of the route visitors should take to minimise erosion of the site.

Areas of site are still dangerous and need to be properly fixed; voids across the site have opened up since the water table has receded; a survey needs to be carried out and any discovered should be filled in. Other areas such as the saint's tomb are extremely unstable and currently have been filled with sand to prevent further collapse. A team of conservators need to support the tomb so that it is not at risk of collapse before any visitors can use it once again. One of the biggest problems that has been highlighted in this case study is the lack of any serious signage or interpretation at the site. A few small signs in English describe what the visitor is looking at in the ecclesiastical complex, but there are no other signs across the site; as the site is in a ruinous state, often the visitor has no idea what they are viewing except a destroyed Roman building. Therefore, signs need to be placed at each significant area of site, such as the pilgrim's courtyard, baths, baptistery etc, and offer some background information to each building. A possible way to improve interpretation would be to produce pamphlets that contain a map and some information on them about the site and the individual buildings, offering some historical background. A tour guide may be useful in supporting these pamphlets and these could be potentially drawn from the nearby modern monastery of Mar Mina.

8.7 Conclusion

The site of Abu Mina is distinctly different to the previous two case studies in this thesis, it is an archaeological site rather than a living heritage site. As such it presents its own set of problems which are further complicated with a second layer of management from its World Heritage Listing. Abu Mina is a historic pilgrimage centre of international importance and holds a particular reverence to both Coptic Christians and is of interest to other Christian denominations, who although do not believe it to be of particular reverence, is still a Holy Christian site to visit. Aside from its local importance it is also a highly important historical and archaeological heritage site that is still providing data and evidence of early Christian Roman life. Its wider meaning and context within the global narrative really needs more public interpretation and this is perhaps where its World Heritage Status really needs to be emphasised through clear and concise interpretation.

One of the key points made throughout this case study is of Abu Mina's UNESCO World Heritage Listing; as discussed in chapter 2, this listing comes with an expectance of increased management, interpretation and conservation. Clearly the management of Abu Mina has not lived up to expectation and since 1992 the site has been left to degrade and been at the mercy of inauthentic and badly designed 'conservation' projects. As a UNESCO site, the management would be expected -and ought to be- of a much higher standard. Unfortunately, there has been no clear management strategy forthcoming despite repeat assurances from the Department of Antiquities. This slow approach to authorise and complete a management plan is ultimately what is holding up any kind of conservation work from being completed. The management plan needs to authorise a conservation survey, structural engineers in the first instance before any kind of remedial action may be taken. UNESCO have not covered themselves in glory over the matter either; although they have monitored the situation from afar since 2000, they have only authorised three ICOMOS missions to survey the issues that have plagued the site and have not really brought any great pressure upon the Department of Antiquities to address the underlying issues at Abu Mina aside from implementing a plan to reduce the water table. Overall, the lasting impression is that some UNESCO sites in Egypt are more worthwhile than others; Luxor and the Pyramids at Giza have certainly been the focus of improvements in recent years, yet Abu Mina has taken nearly 16 years to come to this point before any serious

remedial work has been actioned. The conclusion may be that the focus upon the oft-travelled to pharaonic heritage is given much more credence and attention over the less economically viable Christian heritage.

The issues between the Department of Antiquities and the Local Copts are yet to be resolved; it is laudable that a working group has been set up to try and work through the issues each side has, but it is clear that there are issues that will not be easily remedied between the two sides. The wooden church erected in the Great Basilica clearly evidences the importance of the site in local Christian memory and to remove this, although it was erected illegally, does not factor in the deep spiritual and religious attachment the local Copts place on the ecclesiastical complex. Trying to balance the conservation needs and the religious needs of the Copts is a difficult act, but it is one which needs further discourse between the two parties; without further discussion, there will constantly be difficulties in moving forward with the conservation and reopening of the site in the future. The conservation issues are a long way from being resolved; this case study has offered a four-step process for basic mitigation of the main site issues, though the extent of it means that this is not going to be a cheap undertaking. Potentially it may be more prudent to focus on the core of the site such as the ecclesiastical complex rather than the periphery in the first instance and maintain a conservation and tourism focus upon this core rather than the less exciting periphery. The case study of Abu Mina was the last case study in this thesis; the next chapter concludes the issues that have been discussed in the preceding chapters and attempts to draw a number of conclusions about Coptic heritage and how it is treated in Egypt.

Chapter 9: Conclusion

I have attempted in this thesis to provide an overview of the state of site management and presentation of a forgotten element of Egyptian heritage, namely the Coptic Churches; in part, this has been achieved by comparing Egyptian practices with those used within England, but also with a robust critique of the problems facing Egyptian heritage specialists. One of the primary aims has been to provide basic conservation plans that are sustainable and quick fixes for a cross section of Coptic heritage sites; an urban church, a Red Sea Monastery and a poorly managed UNESCO World Heritage Site. To create complex conservation plans for these sites, both Governmental and Ecclesiastical commitment is required to complete these. Without background context to Egyptian conservation practices and current legislation, the conclusions the conservation plans decide upon, have no grounding in reality. As touched upon in the introduction, the Middle East is currently in crisis, the 'Arab Spring' in early 2011 brought about social unrest and governmental disorder, not only within Egypt but across Tunisia, Libya and perhaps most destructively and widely felt across the Western hemisphere in Syria and Iraq.

One of the largest problems that has been borne out of the displacement of local communities and the lack of a functioning government (and perhaps more importantly a lack of social order and proper policing), is looting at archaeological and heritage sites across the Arab world. If we examine Iraq, a number of authors (MacGinty 2004; McC Adams 2005) have detailed how, in the aftermath of the fall of Iraq and Saddam Hussein, that mob looting occurred; it should be noted that their discourse focuses upon mass looting and not solely looting of antiquities although this is discussed, but they do provide important background context to the problem in Iraq that shows it not to be a solely stolen antiquities problem, but a much larger societal issue, particularly at the start of the fall of Saddam's regime. While the looting of shops and museums has ceased with the re-emergence of governmental control, looting of antiquities from archaeological sites has continued. Elizabeth Stone has charted which sites have been looted in Iraq since 2003 and it appears that High Mesopotamian and Ur III have been most consistently plundered (Stone 2015: 180). Part of this problem can be blamed upon the remoteness of these archaeological sites where thieves are highly unlikely to be caught (Stone 2015: 183), and a lack of heritage inspectors to keep

the illicit trade in check (McC Adams 2005: 61). The destruction of historical monuments by ISIL for ideological reasons in northern Iraq is also a depressingly topical theme (Bott 2015).

Iraq is not alone in facing this problem, since the civil war began in 2011, looting has occurred at many historic sites. Jesse Casana has used satellite imaging to document and collate data to determine the extent of looting within Syria prior to the war and in the ensuing four years. He concluded that prior to the war, minor looting was a common occurrence (Casana 2015: 147), citing archaeological sites such as the multi period Roman site of Dura Europa and the Roman-Early Islamic site of Resafa that displayed signs of small looting holes dating back to at least 2000 (Casana 2015: 147). He concluded from his study that since Islamic State took hold of large parts of Syria, looting has increased exponentially with the breakdown of law (Casana 2015: 147). Indeed, the reasons why locals commit illicit looting of archaeological and heritage sites are complex with many looters regarding their actions justifiable and legitimate (MacGinty 2004: 859), for example, members of a poor community needing to feed their children and loved ones may resort to it as a means of survival for instance. Often however, there needs to be what Roger MacGinty calls 'enabling conditions'; these are the availability of the looters and lootable sites, and absence of restraint and a permissible socio-cultural environment to perform the actions (MacGinty 2004: 861). He also concluded that a key factor in the availability of the looters, was a presence of an organised militant group either state or non-state sponsored (MacGinty 2004: 863). So, these enabling conditions have been met in both Iraq and Syria, with the breakdown of law and order, allowing members of society to illicitly remove antiquities and sell them on the black market.

It is clear that illegal excavation of heritage sites and the looting of antiquities has been occurring for many years prior to the outbreak of war in Iraq and Syria. The rise of Islamic State has brought about an increase in both the level of looting occurring, but also a more subversive, ideologically driven destruction of many heritage sites in the region (Harmansah 2015: 170; Casana 2015: 142); not only are they looting sites, but they are also destroying selected heritage sites with explosives and bulldozers. Omur Harmansah concisely reiterates that members of Islamic State follow an obsessive ideology of *Shirk*, which is the worship of images of false gods as equal to Allah. This obsession with idolatry has taken the form of coordinated destruction of

historical monuments, both Pagan and Christian. The Pagan Roman Temple of Bel in the city of Palymra, Syria, was built in the 2nd-century AD and had survived nearly 1800 years was levelled with explosives in late August 2015 (Guardian 2015a). This followed the execution and public display of the body of Palmyra's chief curator Khaled al-Asaad (Guardian 2015b).

Saliently and more importantly to this study is the campaign by Islamic State to eradicate Christian heritage sites and to enslave and displace local Christian communities. Several ancient Christian heritage sites have been targeted recently; in August-September 2014, the Monastery of St Elijah in Mosul, Iraq was razed to the ground. The destruction of this site is important as it was the oldest Christian monastery in Iraq with a construction date of 590AD. Its destruction was only confirmed by satellite photography in January 2016, when it was confirmed nothing of the structure has survived (The Guardian 2016b). In early August 2015, the monastery of Mar Elian near to the town of Quaryatain in Syria, was damaged by shelling and then levelled by extremists (Finneran and Loosley 2005; The Independent 2015a). Commenting on the destruction, Niall Finneran, who excavated at the site in 2003 and 2004, has reviewed the pictures of the complex and they suggest that the complex has been razed by a bulldozer; the saints tomb has been destroyed, the monastery has been totally obliterated and is beyond saving (N Finneran 2016: Pers. Comm). Finally, the Syriac-Catholic Monastery of Mar Behnam 20 miles south-east of Mosul was destroyed in 2014 (The Independent 2015b). In Libya, it is feared that many Christian sites have been destroyed although none have been confirmed yet; it has been confirmed that many Sufi (a form of Islam) shrines have been destroyed (Daily Mail 2015)

These examples are part of a larger trend of Muslim extremists within the Middle East and North Africa attempting to airbrush out centuries of cultural history under the guise of idolatry. Unfortunately, these are not the only extremist group to have attempted this removal of history; previously the example of the Taliban, who destroyed the Bamiyan Buddha statues in Afghanistan was cited, so it is not a uniquely Islamic State issue, rather it is an Islamic *fundamentalist* problem. Omur Harmansah has argued that the destruction of cultural heritage by Islamic State should be viewed as a power discourse (Harmansah 2105: 173), that they are operating like a reality show with the destruction of the Syrian and Parthian sculptures in the Mosul Museum

destroyed purely for the act of producing the video and not an act of iconoclasm (Harmansah 2015: 175). Even if one were to accept that the Parthian statues and heritage sites were just the consequence of producing a video, the level of destruction shows that they wish to erase them from existence, one does not need to raze a Christian site to the ground to make it unusable, yet these Islamic fundamentalists choose to completely obliterate particularly well known heritage sites they come into contact with. The level of brutality in their destruction belies, not just a wish to stop Christians from worshipping at these sacred sites, but to make sure that they can never come and return to these sites again; in essence they are trying to remove the history of the local community.

It is important to realise that there is a very real human tragedy to this destruction also. Sometimes as heritage specialists, we forget that although heritage sites are being destroyed and looted, the local Christians, non-conformist Muslims and other minorities such as the Yazidi people are being murdered and enslaved. For example, in 2015, between 70-100 Assyrian Christians were kidnapped from north-east Syria (Ibtimes 2015); in August 2015, a Christian priest, Father Jacques Mourad was kidnapped and has not been seen since (Guardian 2015c). Niall Finneran has suggested that this persecution of Christians is a sadly topical issue, with many minorities currently at risk across the Middle East (Niall Finneran 2016: Pers. Comm) Of course they are not the only minority to be persecuted; the Yazidi people, a Kurdish speaking community which practice a mixture of Islam, Nestorian Christianity and Zoroastronism (Huffington Post 2016), have been the target of persecution and murder, with over 40,000 Yazidi fleeing up mount Sinjar to escape murder and enslavement (The Guardian 2014).

Stepping back from Syria and Iraq to gain a wider perspective of Christian persecution and destruction of heritage, there are numerous examples of Christians persecution across the globe, and not only by Muslims; in Delhi, India, St Sebastian's Church was burnt down by Hindu militants. Indeed, over 194 separate attacks on Christians were recorded in 2015 by activists (The Telegraph 2015). In China, Christians are attempting to halt the demolition of ten churches in Zheijang province by the ruling Communist party (The Telegraph 2014). In Sudan (part of ancient Nubia), a new dam project threatens to obliterate thousands of historical sites including many Coptic Christian religious sites (SAFE 2012). These examples prove that persecutions against

Christians and their built heritage is widespread and not solely limited to the Middle East, and it is not only carried out by Muslims. This discourse contextualises the dangers that currently face Christianity within the Middle East and more broadly across the world, so now we must look towards Egypt.

With the instability engulfing Iraq and Syria, Egypt in comparison, has entered a period of stability, with the democratic election of General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in May 2014. There are no longer riots within Cairo and social order has been regained after the fall from grace of the Muslim Brotherhood. One may view Egypt as relatively stable compared to the other countries in the Middle East, although there are still issues with terrorism performed by Islamic Militants. In chapter 3, the discussion focused upon the fundamental problems with how heritage is dealt with in Egypt, but the fear that Egypt's rich heritage would be completely destroyed during the revolution have not come to fruition. Looting of antiquities at archaeological sites does still occur, although a comprehensive list which quantifies the extent of looting in Egypt has not been released yet (Parcak 2015: 196). Sarah Parcak has used satellite imagery at four different pharaonic sites to determine whether looting has ceased or increased. It appears looting has ceased or slowed down considerably at all sites, attributable to an increase in security since a stable government was formed (Parcak 2915: 197).

With the appointment of Abdel Fattah el Sisi and a stable new government in power, the newly appointed head of the Ministry of Antiquities Mohammad Ibrahim has continued reclaiming Egyptian antiquities from foreign owners by co-operating with antiques sellers. The Ministry of Antiquities Recovery and Repatriation Unit have recovered thousands of artefacts using a sophisticated web tracking database (Parcak 2015: 196). These efforts have led to the Egyptian government reclaiming a number of antiquities from foreign owners. In November 2015, Austria returned an uschebi statue to Egypt that had been stolen by smugglers after the 2011 uprising. (The Local 2015). In October of the same year, the Ministry of Antiquities stopped the sale of Islamic object that were due to be sold at the London auction house Sotheby's (Al Ahram 2015a). Continuing this trend into 2016, the Egyptian embassy in Berlin received a pharaonic ivory statue stolen from Elephantine in 2013, after they contacted Interpol to investigate (The Cairo Post 2015). In January 2016, The Ministry of Antiquities held a 'Repatriated Artefacts' exhibition at The Egyptian Museum in Cairo which showcased 226 artefacts that were returned from other countries following their theft after the

2011 uprising (The Cairo Post 2016). Clearly, the Egyptian authorities have been busy reclaiming as many of the artefacts that were looted from museums and archaeological sites, and have not just idly let them be sold off to private foreign buyers.

While recovery of small finds and portable antiquities have received much needed attention by the government, the plight of Egypt's 10-15 million Christians has developed into a worrying trend of violence and intimidation; many of their heritage sites which are used for services and places to pray are increasingly under threat. The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom 2015 annual report concluded that although violence has decreased significantly from previous years (USCIRF 2015: 90), there is an atmosphere of impunity due to a lack of prosecutions for those who enact violence against the Copts (USCIRF 2015: 90). Threats of violence are still widespread against Christians; during the commemoration of the Assumption in August 2015 military checkpoints had to be set up to deter any violence or those who wished to re-enact the attacks at The Virgin Mary Church at al-Warraq in October 2013 (Al Monitor 2015).

To really underline the harsh reality of the threat to Coptic heritage sites, the Monks and Priests at the Monastery of St Macarius which was originally built in the 5th-century, have conflicted with the Egyptian government who wish to destroy part of the monastery to construct a new highway (Al Ahram 2015b). This culminated with road workers threatening to bulldoze the site, and monks laying down in front of bulldozers to stop them (Breitbart 2015). It is not only Coptic heritage sites at risk in Egypt, a retired army general has filed a court case demanding the demolition of the Monastery of St Catherine, in the Sinai region. His reasoning being that the monastery is a threat to national security (Al Ahram 2014b).

The evidence discussed suggests that the Middle East is in great turmoil at the present moment. Iraq, Libya and Syria are war torn, and thousands of Christians have been displaced and their holiest of shrines destroyed and razed to the ground. Egypt is in a better and more stable position than these countries and therefore has regained much of its grip upon its historic monuments and archaeological sites; they are not at the mercy of looters and violence, although it does still occur, and it is not as widespread as Syria or Iraq. The local Coptic communities and their heritage sites are still under threat, however. Monks and priests still receive death threats and even the

government threatens to damage historic sites to fit their agenda, dismissing their own advisers at the Ministry of Antiquities. It is for this reason that this study of Coptic monuments and production of conservation plans is critical. It is entirely feasible that in the near future some of these sites may be destroyed by Islamic militants, or potentially a misguided government project.

In the course of writing this thesis an attempt has been made to do a number of things. The debate has been framed within the sphere of English legislative practices and the current state of professional archaeology within England. It is hoped that shortcomings within Egyptian heritage practices have been illuminated and the ways it could be improved by adopting certain elements of the English system, albeit not all of them, because, the English system is not perfect (such as the competitive tendering system). Part of my critique of Egyptian heritage practices focused upon the creation of limited conservation plans for a cross section of Coptic heritage sites; essential to the creation of these plans was an examination of what should constitute significance and value, and how we should confer it upon heritage sites. This underlined certain ideas, such as the idea of rarity being a hugely important part of designating significance, but not the overriding aspect; indeed, the whole idea of what information can be gleaned from a site and how important it is to the population, locally, nationally or internationally was equally important as its rarity. Other aspects such as the idea of local and international significance were explored, and beliefs take precedence were debated. The paradigm of collaboration with living cultures was explored and concluded that any work must be completed with the full support of the local community.

The fourth chapter examined conservation techniques and how they should be applied. It presented a number of rather poorly conserved buildings such as the Aghtamar Monastery in Turkey as an example of what we need to avoid when presenting a conserving Coptic heritage. It did present some excellent examples of clever repair such as Masada, Israel and ultimately it is hoped that any conservation work will adhere to international recognised legislation. The final chapter that framed the case studies was that of tourism and in particular the dichotomy of mass vs niche tourism. The idea of heritage tourism was debated in this chapter and motivations for travelling such as to gain spirituality, or to visit a historically important site were discussed. The role that tourism plays in heritage protection is a very important one

and the ways that visitors can be managed underlined the fact that with good preparation and by keeping the visitor involved and engaged, that damage is reduced and overall tourists come away having had a much better and fulfilling experience.

The first of the case studies to be examined was the urban church complex of Haret Zuwaila; this presented serious issues that have had a negative impact upon the built fabric. In particular, the constant flow of ground water into the church was having a disastrous affect upon the walls. Repair and consolidation at the church was not performed to high standards with much of the masonry covered in modern plaster. The conclusion of this case study was that the church needed to remove the plaster and re-establish its authenticity. The second case study focued on the Monastery of St Paul and provided a reappraisal to ARCE's consolidation and repair work, whilst exploring other areas of the monastery not originally covered in their project. Whilst ARCE have stabilised and repaired the Church of St Mercurius, mill and refectory, other problems have become apparent including the covering of the defensive walls and keep in plaster and the high-water table being absorbed into the walls of the Church of St Mercurius. The final case study was the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Abu Mina. This presented different issues to overcome and an extra layer of management. The study focused upon the issues with the surrounding water table and the absorption of salt into the ruined walls and the illegal reconstruction of the ecclesiastical complex by the Copts.

It is hoped that this work will provide the impetus for further research in an area of global heritage, the Christian east (here exemplified by a relatively stable Egypt), which remains poorly understood and appreciated, yet whose historical, cultural and social significance on the wider global stage is huge. This is a living heritage and one of great antiquity. Perhaps it is pertinent to make this observation: Christianity is originally a middle eastern religion, and Egypt played a huge role in its nascent development. Islamic lands of north Africa and the near east are home to some of the oldest Christian communities on earth, and sadly at the time of writing it is more than their heritage that is at risk. People are also dying for their faith, and perhaps that is the main message which we should take from this study.

Glossary of Coptic architectural terms

Aisle: An aisle is a passage which runs through the centre of the nave and at the sides of the nave. Coptic churches are distinguished by a 'return' aisle at the west of the building abutting the narthex, to support a gallery where female members of the congregation gather. Some churches have three aisles, through the centre and flanks, some larger versions in antiquity have five aisles.

Ambon: An elevated platform from which the clergy reads liturgies; cf western 'pulpit'.

Ambulatory: An ambulatory is a covered walkway around the central part of the building.

Apse: The apse is situated at the eastern end of the church and normally it is semi-circular in shape with a dome roof. The altar(s) are usually found here. There are a number of different variations of the apse, such as triconch (three semi-circular apses) and square shaped. Often there was a richly decorated triumphal arch in front of the apse.

Baptistery: The baptistery was used for the sacrament of baptism. Within the baptistery was a font, pool or basin.

Bema: See Khurus below.

Colonnade: A colonnade is a uniform row of columns connected by small arches or architraves.

Column: A column is an architectural support comprised of a shaft, pedestal and in some circumstances a base. They are used to support the structure.

Dome: Many churches in Egypt have domed roofs and these can take the form of semi or full sphere. Many post conquest churches have a domed roof.

Gallery: The gallery is situated on the upper storey of the church over the aisle of

ambulatory. Its original use was to provide more space for the laity and was reserved for females.

Heikal: Sanctuary of the church cut off from the nave by a screen or iconostatis (qv).

Iconostasis: An iconostasis is a screen which separates the sanctuary or bema from the laity. The sanctuary was restricted to the clergy. It holds the holy icons.

Khurus: The khurus is a raised space situated between the sanctuary and the naos. It developed in Egypt in the late seventh century. In the Syrian/Byzantine tradition it is termed 'Bema', and could also translate as 'Choir' in the western tradition of church architecture.

Mandantum tank: A tank used for the ritual of Maundy, or foot washing, before entering the church.

Naos: The naos is another term for the area where the laity assemble. This corresponds to the western 'nave'.

Narthex: The narthex is a longitudinal room which may take the form of an exterior porch or an interior room normally at the western end of the church. It uses was for those not worthy of admittance to the church, such as cathechumens.

Nave: See Naos above.

Pastophorium: These are small side rooms of the church, often there are one on either side of the apse. Their use is to store the Eucharist and prepare the rite of Prothesis (define)

Pillar: Similar to a column, it is a vertical architectural support. It is often used to support arches and is therefore very sturdy at supporting heavy weights. The pillar is comprised of a base, shaft and capital

Presbytery: The presbytery is a room flanking the sanctuary where the priests robe before the service.the area of the church reserved for the clergy.

Prothesis: The prothesis is the small room in the church where the Eucharist is prepared. It is also called the pastophorium.

Return Aisle: This is a passage at the western edge of the church and is unique to Egyptian Chirstian churches. It is separate to the narthex, but runs along the western wall connecting the eastern and western aisles, and is often used to support the galleries where the female congregants gather.

Sanctuary: Holy area around the altar.

Triconch: A triconch is a three sided room or apse surrounded by rectangular or semi-circular niches and each niche contains an altar.

Triumphal Arch: An arch at the entrance to the apse. In western tradition this would be identified with the chancel arch and is often marked by an iconostasis.

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